

"Boyson threat to 16 plus colleges" sang a headline in *The Observer* last Sunday, over a story about the doubts which now surround the fate of Manchester's plan to reorganize on sixth form college lines.

It does not take long to put two and two together and recognize that the Manchester proposals, now awaiting a decision from the Secretary of State, are going to provide an instant test of his ideology and style. Dr Boyson's preference for sixth forms in secondary schools and his distrust of tertiary or sixth form college solutions are well known. Sir Keith Joseph has yet to commit himself but it was for the Centre for Policy Studies, the radical Conservative think-tank Sir Keith helped to found, that Fred Naylor wrote his recent philippic against separate sixth form and tertiary colleges, which pointed clearly towards "mushroom" arrangements as the preferred Tory answer to the question posed by falling rolls. (Under mushroom schemes, most secondary schools only run from 11 to 16, and have no sixth forms, while a few run right through up to 18 and do have sixth forms. Such schools used to be called modern and grammar schools.)

There is every reason to believe that the DES completed the work on the Manchester scheme in July and that the details, together with Lady Young's recommendation for acceptance, landed on Mr Carlisle's desk before he left for his summer holiday. It is thought that he would have released his decision - also expected to be favourable - around the end of September or the beginning of October. This would still have left the Manchester authority time to carry through the administrative changes - advertise the posts, interview the candidates, make the appointments, collect and publish all the information for parents which the law now requires and enrol the pupils - all in time for the opening



Waiting for Sir Keith to empty his in-tray

of the new, reorganized schools in September 1982.

The Cabinet switch is bound to set this timetable back a few weeks but the Secretary of State's functions in the matter are corporate, rather than personal - they do not start all over again from scratch just because Mrs Thatcher has shuffled the pack.

Sir Keith and Dr Boyson now have to gather up the reins as quickly as they can and dispatch this piece of outstanding business. If they delay their response much beyond the beginning of November, it will prejudice the orderly implementation process and, quite apart from anything else, delay the financial savings of £1 million, rising to £4 million a year which Manchester hope to make as a result of the reduction in the total number of secondary places.

Whether he likes it or not, Sir Keith's options are narrowly drawn. He can approve or disapprove, but he can only put forward modifications after consultation with the authority, and the legal advice which Manchester received (echoed, it is understood, by that given to Mr Carlisle) is that without the consent of Manchester, the Secretary of State's power to impose his own solution is strictly limited. (This all links up with the Tameside affair. The authority is entitled to its policies. The Secretary of State's power to approve or disapprove is quasi-judicial: he cannot just substitute his own policy for theirs.)

If Sir Keith Joseph approves the scheme this would certainly be seen as a green light for other areas though no doubt the DES would seek to particularize Manchester, and dispel the idea that the other proposals in the pipeline, such as those from Birmingham, were sure to go through.

No doubt Dr Boyson would like to be able to renege Parnwood, the school which has mounted the strongest defence, and something along these lines might be mooted with the local authority. But any attempt to push the scheme through while retaining Parnwood as a

Sixth formers set to lose tuition cash from council

by Sandra Hempel

Labour controlled Lancashire County Council plans to end paying tuition fees for around 650 pupils in independent schools as they enter the sixth form.

The authority's lawyers are currently studying the legality of the education committee's plan and have been told to prepare a report as soon as possible.

The five former direct grant schools and one former voluntary school whose fees average £800 per year will be affected. The schools' heads will be challenging the plan in the High Court if it goes ahead.

The authority decided to phase out direct grants in 1978 and the pupils concerned, who are in the third, fourth and fifth forms, are the last to receive this aid. Now those entering the sixth form after 1982 may have to fund their education in the state sector.

The schools are: Arnold School and Elmfield Girls', Blackburn; King Edward VII and Queen Mary, Lytham St Annes; Kirkham Grammar, Kirkham and Queen Elizabeth at Blackburn.

"We are in close contact with the parents who are obviously very concerned," said Mr Robert Mardling, deputy head of Arnold School where around 100 pupils will be affected. "At the moment we are canvassing views and getting support from parents and from the educational world to oppose this plan whose implications are tremendous. We will be considering court action as a last resort."

"The plan is not to cut off assistance immediately but to end it after the fifth form in a scheme that is being phased out anyway," said Lancashire chief assistant education officer Mr John Hudson. "We will of course offer these children sixth form places in the maintained sector so that they will be able to continue their education."

Although the authority has said it intends to offer state places to these pupils, it is not clear that it has any legal obligation to do so for post 16 pupils.



Suspended teachers Alan Corkish and Lynda Hughes

MP takes up the case of suspended anti-cane staff

by Richard Garner

A Member of Parliament has urged Mr Neil Kinnock, Labour's education spokesman, to intervene in the case of the four teachers suspended from Litherland High School, in Bootle constituency.

Mr Alan Roberts, Labour MP for Bootle, has claimed that the teachers have been victimized for following Labour Party policy in opposing corporal punishment.

He has written to Mr Kinnock and Mr Martin Flannery, chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party's education group, asking them to discuss the situation at Litherland at their next meeting.

Mr Roberts has also criticized the National Union of Teachers for not doing enough to defend the teachers.

Four teachers have been suspended from the school and two have not been told the reason for their suspensions. One, Mr Alan Corkish, has already been dismissed, and a call for the dismissal of a second, Ms Lynda Hughes, will be heard by a Section education department disciplinary hearing next week.

An NUT spokesman said: "We represented Mr Corkish at the first hearing. Thereafter he put the matter in the hands of a different solicitor rather than the union's legal department, so clearly there is nothing we can do."

"The executive decided at the weekend that Mr Corkish should be advised that the union will do all possible to protect his interests provided he places his case in the hands of the union."

The controversy first arose when STOPP, the anti-caning pressure group, claimed Litherland had one of the highest incidents of corporal punishment in the country.

Protesters face ultimatum

Hundreds of teachers in Birmingham have been threatened with "fines" or disciplinary action if they continue with their protest action against cuts.

Members of the National Union of Teachers in the city are refusing to cover for absent colleagues in a bid to get the authority to employ more supply teachers and give a pledge that children approaching the age of five will be admitted to school.

However, the Labour-controlled city council has now warned the teachers that it considers they will be in breach of their contract if they continue with the action and has added that they will face "damages".

This could take the form of docking teachers' pay for the period they refuse to cover or taking disciplinary action against them. The ultimatum comes into force next Wednesday.

Mr Charles Gray, the education committee chairman, said: "We feel, on the advice that we have received, that they have a contractual obligation to cover for an absent colleague for up to five days."

Mr Tony Miller, spokesman for the Birmingham association of the NUT, said: "We are not going to be swayed from our action in defending education standards. We think they are on very dodgy ground as far as the legal argument goes."

"We're not denying that the authority has been very good in its attitude by raising a supplementary rate to offset the loss of grant from Mr Heseltine, the Environment Secretary. However, education is still suffering from an earlier round of cuts from the city council and six years of a siege economy under successive governments. One of the results has been more teacher illness with teachers being at their wits' end covering up for gaps in the system."

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Comment

Hard times for book publishers

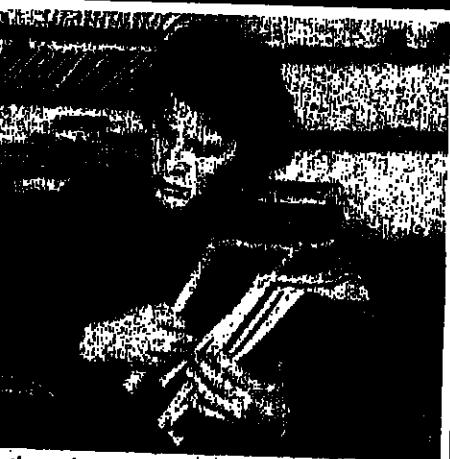
Most schools have at least one book-buying blunder hidden away at the back of a cupboard. An expensive set of glossy general studies books that were soon abandoned when the keen young teacher moved on after a year. A French reader that somehow did not seem as suitable when it arrived in bulk as it had when it featured in a publisher's exhibition.

The severe restraint on capitation in most authorities will inevitably force schools to ask themselves "is this book really necessary?", but that is certainly no guarantee that they will end up buying the best, or even the third or fourth best, book available for their purpose. In a market where there are over 350,000 titles in print, supplied by more than 400 publishers, it is inevitable that from time to time money will continue to be wasted on bad choices, and more importantly, pupils will have unsuitable books foisted on them.

It was not surprising, then, that the committee looking into the supply of books to schools and colleges, under the chairmanship of Lady David (page 4), found itself constantly returning to the question of the amount of money available to teachers for book-buying, even though this was outside their terms of reference.

The committee was set up by the educational publishers and booksellers, but included representatives of teachers, librarians and local authorities. Though their report is not just another case of special pleading, disguised as educational altruism, it is certainly heavier on recommendations for teachers and local authorities and lighter on ways that publishers and suppliers might give schools a better service. Lip-service is paid to the importance of giving priority to educational needs over financial considerations when book buying is put out to tender. But in the harsh economic climate that seems so much too real.

Some of the recommendations - that local authorities should include teachers' professional reading when fixing capitation levels, for example - will cost more money. Most of them concern ways of improving the method by which teachers select and order books, which should eventually save money. They do, however, read very much like: pay your bills promptly, order your books all the year round



Geoffrey Holland

so there is no summer rush, and offer bulk suppliers long contracts.

The publishers and suppliers know better than most sections of British industry that the easy days are over. It would have been nice to have seen in this report more emphasis on ways in which they might give the customer a better deal.

In search of a strategy for 16-19

The Secretary of State took off for Japan last week to fulfil a commitment entered into months ago while he was at the Department of Industry. He went armed with a bundle of improving reading supplied for him by the ever-solicitous DES. Sir Keith is a voracious reader - he even remembers what he reads.

Where will his interests lie? The indications are that he is determined to carry over to the DES the interest in the links between education and industry which he showed at the DoI. It looks as if he will want to see the DES taking a more active part in discussions with the Department of Employment and the Manpower Services Commission on the future of the Youth Opportunities Programme.

The September unemployment figures which sent another ripple of despair across the media this week, provide a grim reinforcement for Sir Keith's resolve. The official total of 2,998,000 includes school leavers, but does not include the 200,000 or so who are in special schemes such as the YOP.

There is no disguising what this means: the chances of a boy or girl finding regular employment immediately on leaving school have sunk to about 50 per cent. Next year, the pessimists believe, only one in three of them will be able to find ordinary jobs.

Hence, of course, the urgency behind Mr

Geoffrey Holland's plans to turn the YOP into a proper, systematic, pre-vocational training scheme. The traditional arrangements for initiating young people into employment and into industrial and commercial skills break down when youth employment collapses. They are bound to do so if induction and training are the sole responsibility of the employer: no employer, no training.

When the Prime Minister and Mr James Prior spoke on these matters last July, announcing the most recent package of measures for youth unemployment there were welcome indications that the Government has come to share the MSC's view of what has to be done to transform YOP, even if, as yet, it seems unable to swallow the cost of doing the job properly.

This week, the £600 million plan put forward by a group of Tory backbenchers led by Mr James Lester, MP, was sent to the Prime Minister (details appeared in *The TES* on August 28), adding yet more voices of good advice.

Of course, Mrs Thatcher and her new Employment Secretary may write them off as sentimental wets who want to spend their way out of trouble. But this is not just a matter of relieving the immediate misfortunes of young people whose lives are temporarily blighted by the recession. It is a question of creating a new and more formal framework of rules, benefits, education and training courses, work placements and counselling, which can replace the disappearing patchwork of opportunities of juvenile employment and the already inadequate and haphazard training arrangements loosely associated with it.

If this isn't done - if significant improvements are not made in YOP that ensure a proper education and training element in every scheme - then the existing YOP will break down within a matter of six months. That is the message the MSC have received from their trade union members, echoed and amplified two weeks ago at the TUC conference.

Sir Keith Joseph ought to put the weight of the DES firmly behind improving the quality of the experience offered to young people. Ideally, he should also be considering what the implications should be for those who stay within the school system beyond the age of 16, and in particular, for the new sixth-formers.

One suggestion is that the time has come to adopt a straightforward principle that with the exception of the academic A level groups, all who stay within the educational system beyond 16 should include within their programme courses and experiences which are related to the world of work. This would be the logical extension to the rejection of the CEB and the introduction of a 17 plus vocational exam. It would leave all sorts of anomalies to sort out if

hardship were to be avoided where individuals wanted to buck the system. But given a general attitude towards individual exceptions, Sir Keith might well feel this principle would provide him with a strategic guide-line for the future, and more than that, open up the way for diverting some money from the MSC to the work/experience component of non-A level post 16 education in school. And it might strengthen the case for a "technical baccalaureat" as an alternative to the present pattern of A levels for those heading for higher education.

Burnham at 4%

Among the signs of the end of summer first thoughts of Burnham. The Government's 4 per cent cash limit has united the public sector unions in their determination to put big pay claims, while at the same time ensuring that some of them are very much more likely than others to have the muscle to get their own way.

Reports this week of ideas being mooted by the employers for changes in the pay structure to increase the potential rewards for devoted class teaching, have to be read against the per cent background. Restructuring of work is going to be well nigh impossible on per cent. That goes, equally, for the teachers' proposal for automatic progression through the scales.

A feature of the employers' plan for new awards is said to be regular assessment, probably by heads, for all assistant staff. The case for annual assessments is already building up on general personnel management grounds. Linking it to pay prospects is logical but may arouse the hostility of unions which are sceptical of the power merit awards give to the managers of the system.

No comment

"2. In so far as section 4(3) of the Act provides that any provision - (a) contained in arrangements made under section 3 ('new arrangements'), and (b) relating to a matter dealt with by regulation under section 4(1) thereof, shall have effect subject to the regulations made under section 4(3) shall have effect as if a reference there to the new arrangements included a reference to the old arrangements; accordingly, the old arrangements shall have effect subject to the regulations" - from the Education (School Governing Bodies) Regulations 1981

Sofer 'might have stayed'

An Anne Sofer, the Greater London Labour councillor who is resigning in the hope of winning her seat back as a Social Democrat, said this week that she might have put off her resignation if Labour had left her future, and more than that, open up the way for diverting some money from the MSC to the work/experience component of non-A level post 16 education in school. And it might strengthen the case for a "technical baccalaureat" as an alternative to the present pattern of A levels for those heading for higher education.

On Wednesday, she said "My disappointment with the left-wing were not in the main over education, but I had still been chairman I might have hung on in the hope of influencing what happened over things like school meals."

Four years ago Mr Sofer, then the Greater London Council's vice-chairman, resigned in protest at the behaviour of its chairman, Mr Harvey Hinds, and the Labour leaders who backed him. She said that they should have shared their share of blame for the breakdown of the William Tyndale School in Islington, subject of a nationwide scandal and a proposed public inquiry.

Sixth-form decision a priority, says Boyson

Mr Douglas Boyson, the newly appointed minister of schools, told *The TES* this week that a decision on whether to proceed with re-organization of sixth form secondary schools was a priority for him.

He could give no date for a decision but he said there first would be a "compass bearing" towards the Department of Education towards sixth forms in secondary schools.

Mr Boyson said it was well known that the end of the British sixth form was in question. "A question mark hangs over the idea of the sixth form," he said. "Some of the authority retain a sixth form, but others do not."

He said that the situation where some schools have sixth forms and others do not was a "very odd one" and that it was a "very odd one" to see a Niagara of pupils going over the top."

Mr Boyson said other re-organization schemes were on his mind, but that the sixth form was the first priority.

Mr Boyson, chief education officer, has told the Education Committee that a decision on the proposed sixth form

September jobs shock

The new school term has brought only a small reduction in the number of leavers officially jobless.

September's Department of Employment figures, published this week, show that 256,000 have registered in Great Britain - a drop of less than 12,000 since last month.

This suggests that fewer than one in 10 of the 250,000 leavers on the register in July have found jobs or places in the Youth Opportunities Programme. But this year's new supplementary benefit rules mean there were a lot of leavers who did not bother to register during the summer. With the start of the new term they have become eligible for benefit for the first time, and this month's figures therefore include a lot of hitherto invisible jobless.

Nobody knows whether all of these invisibles are included in this month's total: summer leavers became entitled to benefit on September 7, and this month's count includes only those who registered with careers offices within three days of that date. There are certain to be many who will not have got around to registering immediately.

Inquest after car deaths

An inquest is expected to be held next week into the deaths of a teacher and school laboratory assistant whose charred bodies were found in the remains of a burnt-out car in Consett, County Durham, two weeks ago.

The two, 47-year-old school laboratory assistant Mrs Muriel Matthews and 49-year-old maths teacher Mr John Grogan, were both from St Edmund Campion Roman Catholic school in Gateshead.

Police said this week that their inquiries into the deaths were "almost complete" and they hoped that the inquest could be completed next week.

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Sarah Bayliss

Policy on corporal punishment goes to European court Strasbourg to decide on belt

by Richard Garner

The Government faces an important challenge to its policy on corporal punishment today when two mothers go to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg over the use of the "law" in Scottish schools.

The two mothers, Mrs Grace Campbell, a medical secretary from Glasgow, and Mrs Jane Cosans, from Cowdenbeath, Fife, have the backing of the European Commission on Human Rights for their claim that they should have the right to send their children to a school which did not use corporal punishment.

The judgment on today's case is expected to be announced in about two or three months' time and, if the court backs the Commission's findings, the government faces the prospect of reviewing its policy towards corporal punishment in schools throughout the United Kingdom.

The case started when Mrs Campbell failed to receive an assurance

that her son, Gordon, would not be subjected to corporal punishment at his school, St Matthews RC Primary. She claimed in her submission to the European Commission of Human Rights that "it was her wish and her right to have her children educated in a state school in an atmosphere free from the threat and fact of physical violence on persons".

Mrs Cosans' son, Jeffrey, was suspended from school for refusing to accept a beating after admitting he intended to take a short cut home through a cemetery which adjoined his school.

The commission which heard the case agreed by nine votes to five that the failure to respect the two mothers' philosophical convictions was a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Lord Mackay, the Lord Advocate, will be presenting the Government's case to today's hearing while the

commission will be represented by Mr C. A. Norgaard, a Danish Commissioner.

STOPP the anti-caning pressure group, which is supporting the mothers in their case, this week wrote to Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, calling on the government to stop "wasting taxpayers' money" defending corporal punishment in schools.

STOPP also revealed this week that a 13-year-old boy, Joseph McNulty, had been suspended from Cardinal Vaughan Roman Catholic comprehensive school in London after his father had refused to allow him to be caned. Cardinal Vaughan is a voluntary aided school and therefore not bound by the Inner London Education Authority's decision to abolish corporal punishment. The RC Education Commission for Westminster is at present reviewing its policy on corporal punishment.

"Further, in the particular case of schools in Scotland, any 'function' assumed in relation to the maintenance of discipline or the administration of punishment within a school is not a function assumed by the state either directly (through the central government) or indirectly (through the relevant local education authority) ... the United Kingdom has not, under the terms of its domestic law, assumed any function in relation to the maintenance or discipline in schools, such matters falling within the exclusive domain of the authorities of each school.

"However, in the specific context of corporal punishment the powers conferred on the Secretary of State to prescribe standard and general requirements would not permit the Government to change the substantive law in relation to the right of teachers to administer moderate and reasonable corporal punishment."

In the event of the court finding that school discipline amounts to a function assumed by the state, the Government submits that the parents' objections to the use of corporal punishment do not constitute philosophical convictions. They are opinions and, regardless of how strong, cannot be held as the same as philosophical convictions, and as such are not relevant to the Convention and should not be extended to the administration of a school.

The Government says that strongly held views concerning the desirability of co-education or the segregation of children within a single school on the basis of ability would not fall within the scope of the Convention.

The requirement of the Convention is not that the state should respect parents' convictions on the administration of the school system, but the narrower requirement that

Parents' objections to corporal punishment are not philosophical convictions, the administering of it is part of the school's internal administration. It is not a violation of a child's rights, and the establishment of a dual system of belting and non-belting education in Scotland would cost £10m a year.

These are the submissions by the British Government to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg today, writes David Ross.

The British Government in its submission does not accept that corporal punishment falls within the scope of the convention: "Functions relating to the internal administration of a particular school or school system which do not relate to the teaching process but are only ancillary to it are not, in the submission of the government, properly to be regarded as functions in relation to education and teaching."

In the specific context of a school, the methods of exercising and enforcing discipline for the purposes of maintaining good order form part of the internal administration of the school community and do not form an integral part of the teaching process nor directly relate to such a process.

"Further, in the particular case of schools in Scotland, any 'function' assumed in relation to the maintenance of discipline or the administration of punishment within a school is not a function assumed by the state either directly (through the central government) or indirectly (through the relevant local education authority) ... the United Kingdom has not, under the terms of its domestic law, assumed any function in relation to the maintenance or discipline in schools, such matters falling within the exclusive domain of the authorities of each school.

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the state should respect the "education and teaching to their children in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions". Further, the Government submits that it is apparent that the purpose of the Convention was and is to protect children against indoctrination in beliefs, convictions or ideologies which are unacceptable to parents and to ensure that information or knowledge imparted to a child is conveyed in an objective and pluralistic manner.

If the parents' objections are held to be philosophical convictions the Government believes that the correct test for establishing whether corporal punishment interferes with their children's education is whether the use of corporal punishment would be a violation of the children's rights under the Convention.

The Government does not accept that because the two children have attended schools where corporal punishment was applied it involved a violation of their rights.

In their submission last year the Commission concluded that the continued use of corporal punishment in the two schools attended by the children of Mrs Campbell and Mrs Cosans and the failure of Britain to provide non-belting schools constituted a breach of the obligations of Britain under the Convention.

The Government rejects this claim and suggests that the obligation to respect parents' philosophical convictions should not be interpreted as requiring the state to adapt all aspects of its education system to conform with the convictions of each individual parent.

The Commission's findings, the Government believes, underestimate the weight of support among parents for the retention of corporal punishment. The Commission failed to give proper recognition to the right of member states to strike a balance between the conflicting interests. The Government also says that the provision of non-belting education would result in unacceptable public expenditure of an estimated £10m a year in Scotland and many less in Britain as a whole.

It would also have a detrimental effect on education. The Government believes that the difficulties would be increased, the Government's dual system had to be set up in the case in which the existing education system failed to conform to the convictions of parents in fields other than corporal punishment, co-education or streaming.

In addition, serious objections would be raised to differentiation of pupils in questions of discipline. The segregation of pupils into different classes would also create strain on resources. The Government rejects the claim that had been a denial of Jeffrey Cosans' right to education. His suspension from school "was attributable to (Mrs Cosans') refusal and that of her son to accept or comply with reasonable rules."

Home problems keep children from school

by Richard Garner

Cuts in public spending and the high unemployment rate are causing more and more pupils to stay away from school, according to a discussion paper which is being presented to a weekend conference on "Pupils At Risk".

The conference, at Warwick this weekend, is being organized by the National Association of Head Teachers and will include speakers from the field of education, the police, magistrates and social workers.

A paper prepared by Mr Will Turner, president of the National Association of Social Workers in education, and Mr Mel Stewart, its secretary, speaks of "growing concern that a combination of cuts, unemployment and changes in social security regulations has led to financial and material hardship among families with the result that more and more children are staying away from school to look after problems at home."

The paper speaks of "an alarming variety of reasons for absence" adding: "Most absence from school will be unavoidable and connected with genuine illness or some other health related difficulty. An increasing number of children will be away from school because of parental problems."

Why lack of job creates lack of application

Widespread unemployment is becoming a disincentive to youngsters attending school to seek qualifications. Mr Barry Taylor, chief education officer for Somerset, claims today.

He points out that even in Somerset, which has in the past enjoyed one of the highest levels of employment, there were now some parts of the county where six out of 10 youngsters leaving school could find themselves without a job.

Writing in *Local Government Policy Making* he says that serious discipline, while still restricted to a small minority, was increasing.

Some youngsters vocally questioned the point of attending school but the main response among the young was still one of anxiety and depression, rather than alienation and anti-social behaviour.

The Government's Youth Opportunities Programme had proved invaluable - both to the youngsters

themselves, who would otherwise be idle, and to organisations. However the schemes, with few exceptions, did not create a single extra permanent job - nor was that the intention.

"So after six months or so most youngsters are, in effect, back at the starting post, looking for work, somewhat older, perhaps a little wiser and a bit more experienced."

"I am not suggesting that the Youth Opportunities Programme should be abandoned, simply that it

is in no sense an answer to the fundamental problem.

"But it does provide young people with an experience of work - often more truly educational and relevant to their needs than they had at school - on a strictly temporary basis."

A way of helping to solve the problem was to raise the education - not school leaving age - to 17.

David Lister



"Super-truant" Tony Laing with his father Peter

How truant stayed off for six years

The country's biggest education authority explained this week how a "one in a million" truant had eluded them for six years.

Eleven-year-old Tony Laing was enjoying his first full week of school in the Inner London Education Authority this week - after being discovered as a potential pupil six years after he should have first attended school.

Until last week, Tony, who lives with his father in Mile End, East London, had only attended school for one day - and hated every minute of it.

A spokesman for the Inner London Education Authority said that Tony and his father had lived in a variety of short-stay homes and the authority had not known about him until Mr Laing had presented his child at Redlands School earlier this month.

However, Tony did not return and efforts to contact Mr Laing - through letters sent by registered post and recorded delivery - failed since he had moved back to live with his mother.

It was only when Mr Laing wrote to the London evening paper, the *New Standard*, saying he felt his child would be suitable for an education course they had written about and mentioning that he had only been to school once during the past six years that the ILEA were able to trace Tony again.

Now he is a pupil at Den Jonson Primary School in East London - where his father went 20 years ago. The spokesman said: "The system cannot be foolproof unless you have a police state with identity cards and education welfare officers calling round at every house saying 'bring out your children'."

Mr Laing, a 33-year-old maintenance worker, said: "I can't really explain why they never contacted me."

Lambeth-style clampdown in Southwark

Six officers of the National Union of Teachers have been suspended from union membership pending a disciplinary hearing in a carbon copy of a clampdown on Left-wingers in Lambeth launched by the union's leadership earlier this year.

The six, all from the Southwark association of the NUT in London, face a disciplinary hearing next week for going ahead with a demonstration and lobby of councillors in protest against the compulsory transfer of teachers at the end of the summer term. They had been told by Mr Fred Jarvis, the union's general secretary, that they should call it off.

The suspended six are: Mr Joe Bent, president, Ms Amanda Leon, secretary, Debbie Webster, vice-president, Gill Lowenstein, membership secretary, Sue Lowenstein, ex-president, and Ray Cooke, treasurer.

Ms Leon said that about 70 teachers had turned out for the demonstration in spite of the fact they had been told about Mr Jarvis' letter in advance.



The two pupils of St John Fisher Roman Catholic School, Leicester, test the acoustics in the new music room built mainly by parents and staff. The building of the room won a £100 prize from the local paper in a contest for the school which did most to help itself.

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Employers' sample favours 'pupil profiles' scheme

by Sandra Hempel

Employers in South East Wales and Avon have come out in favour of a school's work on pupil profiles.

Around 270 employers were asked for their views on pupil profile development work at Brynmawr Comprehensive School, Gwent. The school assesses school-leavers' skills in a range of areas including numeracy, literacy, reasoning, communication and their personal qualities. Some assessment is in the form of one-off tests while the rest is on a continuous basis.

Eighty per cent of the employers who responded found the information on literacy to be "about right" while 75 per cent were satisfied with

the coverage of numeracy and communication skills and 65 per cent with personal qualities and skills.

The work at Brynmawr is going on for over a year and the first batch of 130 pupils received their profiles last Easter before leaving school this year. Brynmawr is one of the forerunners in this work and the model is currently being studied by the Schools Council's Committee in Wales.

"The profiles were well-received but we still have a lot of work to do on them," said Mr. Michael Scott-Archer, the headmaster.

An alternative strategy - on schooling

A maintained school without punishments or compulsory lessons is proposed in a new policy statement by the Campaign for State Supported Alternative Schools.

The campaign calls for an alternative school that is "democratic, open, non-hierarchical, non-competitive, non-violent and limited in size" and that choice and participation should not just be the privilege of those who can afford to pay.

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Many would welcome fixed-term contract system, conference told MP urges reselection of head

by Richard Garner

Head teachers should face reselection in the same way as Labour MPs, Mr. Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for West Lothian, told a conference on the problems of gifted children at the weekend.

His comments immediately gained support from Mr. Robert Rhodes James, the Tory MP for Cambridge, and Mr. Peter Downes, headmaster of Henry Box school, Witney, Oxfordshire, one of the head teachers' representatives at the conference.

Mr. Dalyell, addressing the conference, said: "I don't believe you can tell what a man who is appointed at 40 will be doing at 58. I would like to know what people here would think about reselection of headmasters."

"The argument is not that there are going to be sweeping changes. The overwhelming majority of Labour MPs will be reselected and it would probably be the same with headmasters if they were in the same position every five or seven years."

"Perhaps there should be some element of reselection in a society



Tam Dalyell - comments gained support

which, rightly or wrongly, is appointing many people to crucial positions at a younger age."

Mr. Rhodes James said: "In private, many head teachers would actually welcome some kind of fixed-term contractual system but, of course, they are the ones who would

have no difficulty from their reselection."

Mr. Downes emphasized: "It must be linked to a more realistic training and retraining programme for headmasters". He called for colleges where they could be recycled and retrained.

Mr. Dalyell, who told the conference that he was the only ex-Etonian left in the Parliamentary Labour Party, also spoke of a "mood of vengeance, not only among Tony Benn supporters" for cutting back the private system of education if Labour were returned to power.

"The atmosphere is completely different now from two years ago, and there can be no doubt whatsoever that there is a complete change of attitude sparked off by the attitude of some Conservative Ministers," he said. He singled out the Assisted Places Scheme as one of the reasons why the Labour party was more committed to curbing private education.

He believed that there were a number of private schools who could not "by any stretch of the imagination

be considered satisfactory institutions."

"Ten years ago there would have been an outcry over any attempt to abolish private schools. However, I am not sure whether the response would be quite so strong now as many people think. Many, many parents who at present send their children to public schools would be in a state of relief that ever-increasing fees would not have to be met by them to do what they conceive to be for the best of their children."

The conference, Gifted Children and their Contemporaries, was held at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, last weekend, and sponsored by the Leonardo Trust.

Mr. Tom Marjoram, FIMF, told the conference that studies in the past had shown that some bright youngsters under-achieved because their schoolwork was aimed at less able pupils.

But he emphasized that the Department of Education had asked schools to ensure that lessons stretch individuals to their limits.

Boyson in attack on cane ban

Dr. Rhodes Boyson, junior education minister, who has been handed the portfolio for the nation's schools by Sir Keith Joseph this week hit out against local authorities banning the cane, and the way religious education is conducted in some schools.

Writing in the *Daily Telegraph*, he said: "The growing pressure from many left wing authorities for phasing out of corporal punishment in our schools, now to be nationally banned if there should be another Labour government, shows that some naive politicians with a Rousseau-esque view of society learn nothing from history."

"It has been particularly unfortunate that the move to more permissive discipline in education coincided with the arrival in many schools of children from West Indian parents drawn from homes with a belief in strict discipline. Such children frequently moved into open rebellion against teachers whom they saw as weak and ineffective and thus against a society which lacked firm boundary lines of behaviour."

"Religious education, and even morning assembly, have in many of our schools lost the sense of moral purpose encouraging self-restraint, personal responsibility and humility in the face of our Creator. In the name of tolerance, but in reality a product of lack of conviction, it has often become a comparison of various religious beliefs and festivals rather like a tour of a museum of religion in Marxist Russia."

"It is time to abolish caning in its schools from January, the secular education authority in England to abolish corporal punishment totally."

Pressure group to back Benn

Labour's education pressure group will be casting its vote in favour of Mr. Tony Benn when the party's annual conference votes for its deputy leader on Sunday.

The Socialist Education Association, which consists of students, teachers, governors, academics, councillors, MPs and parents, conducted a ballot of its 1,200-plus membership on the deputy leadership.

The results, in a 29 per cent poll were 233 votes for Mr. Tony Benn, 77 for Mr. Healey and 52 for Mr. John Silkin. If Mr. Benn is eliminated in the first ballot, the SEA's vote will be transferred to Mr. Silkin since the vast majority of Benn voters gave him as their second preference.

The SEA's vote will be counted in the 40 per cent of the electoral college allocated to the trade union and will amount to about 0.5 per cent of the total vote.

Safety takes dive into cold pools

The decision by Essex County Council not to heat school pools this winter will affect both pupils and adults in the area.

The closure of just one pool, in Colchester, has meant no swimming lessons for more than 1,500 pupils and the winding-up of classes for the disabled, the mentally handicapped, babies, toddlers, and adults who cannot swim. Life-saving and survival classes have also been stopped.

About 500 adults a week have been using the Sir Charles Lumsden School pool, according to Mrs. Joan Gurney, deputy principal of the Colchester Adult Education Centre. The summer edition of *Essex Education* details how this pool has been used since it was opened in 1972.

The local authority estimates it will save £300,000 on its decision not to heat 24 secondary school swimming pools. School pools have been closed since they have been heated if they find the money to pay for it.

Three mile rule sparks protest

Two education officers were man-handled by angry parents in a protest over Suffolk County Council's new school transport policy.

Pupils who live more than three miles from a school are entitled to free transport under the law. In the past Suffolk was prepared to make a concession for pupils who lived rather nearer. Now in a bid to save money the council has decided to enforce the three mile rule, and pupils in the village of Capel St. Mary near Ipswich are going to have to pay £17 per term.

The plan has already been postponed for a year because of the row. Last year parents in Bury St. Edmunds lost a High Court case over the issue.

The crunch at Capel St. Mary came at the beginning of this term when parents tried to cram their children onto the buses without paying and senior education officials tried to stop them. Mr. David Downes, senior assistant education officer and Mr. Terry Donovan, transport officer, were "physically manhandled beyond the course of duty", says Mr. Tom Cornthwaite, senior assistant education officer.

Undeterred by the Bury St. Edmunds case, the Capel St. Mary parents are planning their own High Court action against the authority. They are to pay the £17 fares to a solicitor to be held until the dispute is settled and the authority will take their children to school in the meantime.



Education officer David Downes under threat.

Action threat in Coventry

Teachers in Coventry are planning to take industrial action over cuts in the city's education budget being introduced after the council's controversial decision to hold a referendum on a possible supplementary rates rise.

Members of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers are specially angry over the fact that teachers' posts were frozen by the authority before the result of the referendum was known.

Under the city council cuts plans, £1,235,000 will be axed from the education budget causing the loss of 100 teaching posts, reducing the capitation allowance by 20 per cent and increasing the cost of school meals from 45p to 50p.

Mr. Ron Coking, the union's national treasurer, said that a general meeting of the Coventry association of the NASUWT had voted overwhelmingly in favour of withdrawing good-will from the authority and refusing to cover for absent colleagues. The action was supported by the union's executives.

He said that members felt they could not "take any more cuts". If they did, they would be faced with demands for more cuts in the future.

Meanwhile, the National Union of Teachers is urging its members in the city over whether they will also refuse to cover for absent colleagues. Mr. Ron Squibbin, the union's press secretary in Coventry, said supply costs had been reduced by 60 per cent.

Kent ticked off for withdrawing bus pass

Kent county council was wrong to withdraw a boy's school bus pass and should reconsider its decision, apologise to the child's father and pay him a small sum in compensation, the local government ombudsman says.

The council is now studying the report by the Commissioner for Local Administration, Baroness Serota,

and will decide at the end of the month. The case has implications for at least another 20 children making similar journeys whose passes were taken away as part of Kent's spending cuts.

The pass covered the distance from the boy's home to the railway station from where he travels 14

miles by train. Officials considered the distance to the station, just over half a mile, to be within reasonable walking distance.

Baroness Serota said the boy's "total journey is quite different from simply having to walk some three-quarters of a mile to and from school".

Take multi-cultural society into account in the primary classroom

by Julia Hagedorn

Few schools in this country have woken up to the fact that we live in a diverse and multi-cultural society, Mr. Norman Thomas, former chief inspector for primary education, said in his first public speech since his retirement earlier this month.

Mr. Thomas, giving the fifth annual Schiller Memorial Lecture at Goldsmiths College in London, warned his audience that teachers ought to be aware of the restrictions they impose on the curriculum because of their own interests and backgrounds.

He added: "Some limitation is inevitable in schools but let us be self-conscious about what it is."

Citing the example of some children he had seen working on a piece of the First of London, Mr. Thomas said that the children were doing the work because it was part of a curriculum that had been determined some years ago. This was not necessarily bad but it did put constraints on the children.

every primary school in England, children are learning about their past and their roots in a way that has been determined by someone who had decided it was a necessary part of the children's upbringing.

He said that the work could not be faulted. It provided a useful educational experience. "But it should give us something to think about that this class had children from 19 different nationalities."

He asked teachers to take the multi-cultural community into account when considering what they did in the classroom. "Children learn from making choices but not from making choices with inappropriate materials or choices that are ill-informed or ill-considered."

Mr. Thomas stressed that learning to live and work as part of a group was an important part of the curriculum. Children needed to act as leaders of that group at times and as

followers at other times. They needed to provide skills that were different from the skills of other members of the group as well as skills that were the same.

"All children should be provided with a range of experiences as individuals and as members of groups in which they play different sorts of roles."

Providing that range of experience should not be an accident of organization but should be as much a conscious part of the curriculum as the work going on within the group. Mr. Thomas concluded with a warning to teachers that they should beware of narrow objectives, literacy and numeracy were long established and proper requirements in a school, he said. But to restrict a school's work to the children's ability to read would not help standards.

"Narrowness in education will lead to that kind of depression in standards that was familiar just after the last war."

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Sarah Bayliss analyses new statistics on planned job cuts

Pupil-teacher ratio worsening

Pupil-teacher ratios in England and Wales will be worsened by next January since councils are planning to cut teachers' jobs at a faster rate than the decline in pupil numbers.

That is one conclusion to draw from the latest set of estimates of local education authority spending in 1981-82, published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy this week. It is the eighth year such figures have been made public.

The statistics from more than 450 councils show that in late spring when they were collected, councils were planning to cut 15,600 teachers' jobs by January 1982. The authorities were expecting to employ 455,900 qualified teachers in January 1982, a 3.3 per cent drop compared with 471,500 employed in January 1981.

The CIPFA statistics show councils are expecting pupil numbers to drop by about 260,000 or 3.1 per cent, to just under 8 1/2m.

The biggest fall in jobs is expected in the primary sector - a reduction of 9,800 or 5 per cent. Pupil numbers will fall by 200,000 or 4.5 per cent.

As a result, ratios in primaries will deteriorate slightly from 22.3 in 1980 and 22.4 in 1981 to 22.5 in 1982. CIPFA points out that the latest figure still represents an improvement over the ratio in 1979, which was 23.1.

The difference in provision has closed slightly since last year when the range was from 16.9 in the Inner London Education Authority to 25.6 in Dudley, West Midlands. The range this year is between 17.4, at best, in the London borough of Brent, and 25.1 at worst in Dudley.

The IEA's primary ratio is now the second best at 17.5, followed by Wolverhampton (18.1), Haringey (18.2), and Gwynedd (18.4). Kent county council has the second lowest ratio (25), a decline in standards since last year when the ratio was 24.1.

CIPFA points out in its commentary that there will be 800 fewer primary schools by January 1982 than in 1978. The size of primary schools is also falling from an average of 203 pupils four years ago to 178 in 1982.

In the secondary sector, authorities are planning to employ 4,500 fewer teachers in 1982 than they allowed for in 1981, a drop of 1.8 per cent compared with an expected decline of 63,000 or 1.5 per cent in pupil numbers. The national average ratio therefore will worsen slightly from 16.3 in 1981 to 16.4 in 1982. The figure was 16.3 in 1980.

The lowest secondary ratio is 12.9 in Brent, which has improved on last year's figure of 13.1, followed by Kent (17.5), Warwickshire (17.5), Croydon (17.6) and Devon (17.6). Kirklees and Wirral are the metropolitan authorities with the lowest ratio of 17.4.

In spite of the continuing fall in numbers of children of nursery age, the number of pupils receiving nursery education has remained stable at 152,000 and the pupil-teacher ratio has improved slightly from 23.3 last year to 23.1 this year.

In contrast to the fall in primary and secondary teacher numbers there is an increase (4.6 per cent) in the number of careers officers, from 3,077 last year to 3,220 this year. So the average number of 14-year-olds per career officer is estimated at 233, compared with 249 last year.

The national average spent on books and other educational equipment has risen from £15 a pupil last year to £17 this year. Similarly, in secondary schools spending per pupil on books has risen from £28 to £31. This very small rise reflects councils' decisions to cut back on capitation and in many cases not to inflation-proof what is spent.

The rise in total unit costs is much sharper and reflects the big increases in salaries. In primary education, where 80 per cent of unit costs goes on staffing, the average has risen from

£436 per pupil to £579. In secondary schools, where employee costs are 75 per cent of gross expenditure, the national average has risen from £629 per pupil to £823.

"The average annual cost of a teacher is expected to increase by 37.1 per cent to £9,163 in primary schools and 36.9 per cent to £9,324 in secondary schools," CIPFA's commentary notes. It adds that last year's figures did not include the effect of the Clegg comparability pay award.

The most spent on a primary pupil is £936 in the IEA, followed closely by three London boroughs. Nowhere outside London tops the £700 mark. CIPFA says that high unit costs in London are a "significant and constant fact".

"It may be presumed that a combination of better pupil-teacher ratios and the high cost of labour and property contribute largely to this high level."

In secondary schools spending per pupil has topped the £1,000 mark in the London area, with the IEA expecting to spend the most, £1,274 per pupil. The lowest spending per secondary pupil is in Bradford with £657 - lower even than any county shire - followed by Kirklees (£719) and Northumberland (£722).

A section on the school meals service shows for the first time that almost 2 million children are bringing a packed lunch to school, compared with 2.8 million who are still paying for a school dinner. Nearly 900,000 pupils are receiving a free meal.

The estimates this year must be taken with a big pinch of salt - as they were last year. They were collected before the May county council elections when some shires went Labour or were "hung" and subsequently decided to increase their spending. Secondly, they were collected before Mr Michael Heseltine, the Environment Secretary, ordered local authorities to revise their budgets because they were set to overspend. Since his pronouncement some authorities, notably Tory shires, have reduced spending.

Local education authority estimates 1981/82

Local Education Authority	Pupil Teacher Ratio		Spending per child on basic educational & PE equipment stationary & materials (gross)		Total unit cost (£)
	Prim	Sec	Prim	Sec	
London IEA	17.5	13.9	32	64	936
Outer London Boroughs					
Barking & Dagenham	20.9	15.7	18	29	677
Barnet	20.7	14.7	18	31	683
Bexley	23.9	17.0	16	39	683
Brent	17.4	12.9	33	50	785
Bromley	23.6	16.2	21	37	586
Croydon	21.8	15.8	17	32	635
Ealing	23.6	16.2	23	52	727
Enfield	22.0	16.9	19	36	580
Haringey	18.2	13.8	23	38	586
Harrow	20.0	14.3	22	47	647
Havering	23.9	16.4	18	38	586
Hillingdon	22.6	16.3	22	37	626
Hounslow	20.4	15.8	27	43	667
Kingston-upon-Thames	23.7	16.5	16	38	573
Merton	21.9	16.0	17	34	620
Newham	20.2	15.3	20	37	738
Redbridge	22.2	15.9	18	38	637
Richmond-upon-Thames	22.5	16.7	23	41	687
Sutton	24.8	17.1	23	42	682
Waltham Forest	22.8	14.8	25	46	629
Total (30)	21.7	15.5	21	39	648
Metropolitan Districts					
Greater Manchester					
Bolton	24.0	16.2	19	30	627
Bury	24.3	16.4	19	38	636
Manchester	21.0	15.2	21	41	653
Oldham	23.0	17.3	18	39	639
Rochdale	23.3	14.2	22	34	639
Salford	22.2	15.9	19	39	579
Stockport	24.2	16.8	19	33	612
Tameside	23.8	16.3	18	30	586
Trafford	23.8	16.7	12	20	534
Wigan	21.8	15.4	14	29	629
Merseyside					
Knowsley	21.7	14.9	21	37	621
Liverpool	23.4	16.9	18	34	638
Salford	23.6	16.1	12	21	618
Sefton	23.0	16.9	14	31	648
Wirral	24.4	17.4	16	25	611
South Yorkshire					
Barnsley	22.2	16.5	17	28	588
Doncaster	21.3	16.0	12	25	612
Rotherham	22.7	17.1	16	28	642
Sheffield	20.4	16.1	25	31	642
Tyne and Wear					
Gateshead	20.0	16.4	17	27	582
Newcastle upon Tyne	19.5	14.0	15	31	705
North Tyneside	21.7	14.9	20	31	629
South Tyneside	21.0	15.3	20	38	683
Sunderland	22.3	16.0	16	29	683
West Midlands					
Birmingham	23.6	16.1	11	24	549
Coventry	21.1	16.4	19	30	590
Dudley	25.1	17.1	14	30	490
Sandwell	23.3	16.6	16	28	605
Solihull	24.1	18.9	12	24	527
Walsall	19.9	14.5	23	34	559
Wolverhampton	16.1	14.3	21	35	684
West Yorkshire					
Bradford	22.5	17.0	11	20	589
Calderdale	22.1	17.2	17	25	559
Kleesdale	24.4	17.4	16	34	612
Leeds	22.7	16.5	7	11	549
Wakefield	22.7	16.9	19	21	674
Total (36)	22.4	16.1	16	28	571
English Counties					
Avon	23.1	16.5	18	29	685
Bedfordshire	22.9	16.5	19	34	685
Berkshire	22.9	16.5	18	34	685
Buckinghamshire	23.6	16.2	20	47	681
Cambridgeshire	23.6	16.8	14	30	632
Cheshire	24.0	16.7	18	27	585
Cleveland	22.1	16.7	19	36	655
Cornwall	24.0	16.7	18	33	622
Cumbria	21.9	16.5	15	24	585
Derbyshire	23.0	17.5	21	37	668
Devon	23.8	17.8	14	28	624
Dorset	23.6	17.1	19	28	642
Durham	21.1	16.7	16	28	628
East Sussex	22.6	17.3	24	37	657
Essex	24.3	17.8	16	28	585
Gloucestershire	23.0	17.3	17	27	584
Hampshire	24.6	17.4	13	27	584
Hereford & Worcester	24.6	16.8	16	26	544
Hertfordshire	22.0	16.3	17	31	578
Humbly Grove	22.4	16.0	18	29	587
Isle of Wight	22.3	16.8	21	34	689
Kent	25.0	17.8	20	37	617
Lincolnshire	24.2	17.1	12	25	498
Lothian	23.3	17.1	17	34	635
Lincolnshire	23.3	17.4	16	35	617
Northamptonshire	23.0	16.9	19	35	685
Northumberland	23.5	16.8	12	28	604
North Yorkshire	23.5	16.8	16	28	600
Nottinghamshire	22.5	16.7	18	31	549
Oxfordshire	24.1	17.2	20	34	599
Shropshire	22.6	16.7	14	28	541
Somerset	24.3	16.2	20	32	580
Staffordshire	22.5	16.7	12	30	580
Suffolk	22.1	16.8	14	26	584
Surrey	22.1	16.3	15	25	584
Warwickshire	24.3	17.5	17	31	628
West Sussex	23.8	17.3	17	28	585
Wiltshire	23.3	16.8	17	30	548
Total (38)	23.3	16.8	17	30	548
Welsh Counties					
Cardiff	23.8	17.6	19	30	677
Ceredigion	18.5	16.5	21	28	678
Dorset	22.6	16.8	14	28	610
Gwynedd	19.4	16.7	18	30	608
Mid Glamorgan	20.0	16.4	19	31	735
North Glamorgan	22.6	16.8	18	32	735
West Glamorgan	19.5	16.3	22	27	612
Total (6)	21.5	16.6	18	27	612
National Averages					
Primary (38)	20.2	14.9	24	47	733
Secondary (38)	22.4	16.1	15	28	571
Non-Met. Counties (47)	23.1	16.8	17	31	579
Total (104)	22.5	16.4	17	31	579

London allowance may rise

Teachers in Inner London schools may receive more than the 7.5 per cent increase in cost-of-living allowance which has been offered to teachers' union leaders during negotiations on their London weighting allowance.

Local education authorities have made it clear they are prepared to increase the cost of the allowances to them by 7.5 per cent if the teachers will accept.

However, they have stressed they would be in favour of offering more to the 22,300 teachers in Inner London - and giving no increase at all to those living on the fringes of London in the Home Counties.

If the teachers' leaders accept this way of dividing up the cash, it could mean increases of about 9 per cent to those in Inner London schools. The present allowances are £864 for Inner London, £567 for outer London and £243 for those on the fringe of the capital.

The teachers are seeking a 13.6 per cent increase in line with government published statistics showing the rise in the cost of living in the area during the past year.

Negotiations on the claim resumed last Friday but broke up without agreement. A further meeting is expected to be held within the next couple of weeks.

Teachers' leaders were hoping that the Labour-controlled Association of Metropolitan Authorities may reconsider its stand on the 7.5 per cent offer in the light of the Greater London Council's decision to offer its employees a 12.5 per cent increase in their cost-of-living allowances. However, even if it did it is unlikely that the full management panel would change its mind.



The London Schools Symphony Orchestra warms up for its 30th anniversary concert which was held on Monday at the Royal Festival Hall.

Nationwide parents' group

An association to coordinate parents' action groups across the country has been set up.

The group, which has no name yet, aims to help parents bring formal and legal complaints about inadequate provision in schools and colleges. It also pledged to fight education cuts and was established at a meeting in Birmingham organized by the Advisory Centre for Education.

Representatives from Warwickshire, Wiltshire, Croydon, Surrey, Cheshire, Suffolk and Northampton

Conference boycott over apartheid

Delegates of the National Union of Teachers have decided to boycott the 1982 conference of the South African Teachers' Union because of the country's apartheid policies.

Mr Jack Chambers, president of the NUT, has been invited to attend the

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By building a model, using LEGO bricks, other material and the imagination of your class or group, you have to decide how to allocate these resources and where the priorities lie: with housing, roads, a new school, a clean water supply or whatever.

You can choose whether to set your project in Bangladesh, China, Guatemala, Sri Lanka or the Sudan.

To help you on your way LEGO and UNICEF will provide you with a free kilo of LEGO bricks

and plenty of background information on the developing countries.

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Each project will be judged for its imaginative work, creativity, understanding of the problems and publicity received.

Prizes of £250 will be awarded to the best projects in each of two age groups: 5-11 years and 12-18 years.

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Please send full details of UNICEF/LEGO 'Project Lifeline' School/College/Youth Organisation

Contact Address

Teacher/Leader's Name

Post this coupon together with a S.A.E. to:

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Unicef
UK Committee

'Keep our heads out of the clouds - not buried in the sand' Be positive, inspectors told

by Bob Doe

More formal school inspections are being carried out by local authorities. But they must not be allowed to sour the relationship between schools and advisers. Mr David Wilkins, president of the National Association of Inspectors and Educational Advisers, says.

Inspections should be so helpful that schools queue up to be inspected.

In his presidential address to the association's annual conference at Royal Holloway College, Egham, today Mr Wilkins calls for wisdom and sensitivity in these inspections.

"We must be positive, not punitive, and we must build up the reputation of our inspections as being one of the best ways of helping a school to help itself."

He criticizes some advisers whose enthusiasm for their subject special-

ism leads them to take too narrow a view of education. And he warns inspectors and advisers to keep their heads out of the clouds when it comes to encouraging schools to take up novel ideas.

"Keeping our head out of the clouds does not mean burying it in the sand," says Mr Wilkins, who is Nottinghamshire's senior inspector.

Mr Dennis Ford, head of a Norfolk primary school, argues in the October issue of *Junior Education* that at a time of falling rolls and financial constraint, advisers, to earn their keep, should be more outspoken in their defence of the education system.

He says advisers do not seem to think campaigning for general improvements is part of their overall responsibility.



David Wilkins

Heads to tackle 16-19 question

Headteachers have decided to establish a special working group to draw up emergency plans to deal with the problems of education for the 16 to 19-year-old age group.

Members of the National Association of Head Teachers, together with other teachers' organizations, have already produced plans calling for moves to cut out the duplication in present provision and a more cohesive strategy for tackling the age

group's problems.

However, the special working group will examine the problem afresh in the light of growing unemployment among school leavers and hopes to come up with plans to submit to Sir Keith Joseph, the new Education Secretary, within the next two months.

Mr John Swallow is chairman of the group.

ONE-YEAR POST-EXPERIENCE DIPLOMA COURSE IN REMEDIAL LANGUAGE STUDIES

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Applications are invited for this course, commencing October 1982, from experienced teachers working with or intending to work with children with specific speech and language disorders in language units or special schools.

This course was set up in 1979 by AFASIC, the Association For All-Speech Impaired Children.

Teachers should apply NOW to:

Professor David Crystal,
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University of Reading,
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Labour's pre-election purge ousts chairman

by Sarah Bayliss

Manchester's education chairman and several of his committee colleagues are among the 24 councillors ousted by the city Labour Party as candidates for next year's election.

Mr Gordon Conquest, who has been a councillor for 13 years and education chairman for the past two-and-a-half, said this week that his education policies were a major reason for the move.

Under his chairmanship, the education committee had made cuts which ran contrary to the election manifesto pledge of no cuts. It had also left unfulfilled a commitment to abolish corporal punishment in schools.

On both counts he said the "practical reality" of holding office was the reason for going against the manifesto.

He had raised the question of the ban with the teachers' organizations

many times. Each time they had refused to accept it. But he would continue to try to persuade the teachers' unions to accept it to corporal punishment.

Mr Conquest said that a policy not cuts would have meant doubling the rates for Manchester residents. He considered "totally unacceptable."

"There's a school of thought that says it's better to cut a little than penalized very heavily by the Government," he subscribed to Labour and his education committee was now drawing up an emergency list of cuts worth £1.4m.

Mr Conquest added that he had his constituency party which he nominated him for the post of national executive committee. There was no question of leaving the party, he said.

Liberals dither over public schools

by Hilary Wilce

Liberal meeting in Llandudno last week heard the appointment of the new Secretary of State for Education roundly condemned by their party's education spokesman in the House of Commons.

"The gulf between Sir Keith (Joseph) and the realities of the classroom is enormous," Mr Alan Bell, who is also Liberal chief whip, told a packed education fringe meeting. He shed no tears for the departure of Mr Mark Carlisle, "but I view with considerable foreboding his successor."

At the meeting, the party which was proving so decisive about an alliance with the Social Democrats, showed itself to have divisions and doubts about educational policies.

A panel of four educationists, answering questions from delegates, was divided on the issue of a core curriculum, and was uncertain what should be done about public schools.

Mr David Terry, principal of a tertiary college, said that public schools were "the biggest single cause of our social ills". They singled out those who were going to exercise power from those they were going to exercise it over. But he could think of no way of abolishing them that "would not be an affront to my Liberal principles, or that would work."

Dame Muriel Stewart, a former chairman of the Schools Council and a former president of the National Union of Teachers, suggested a

"withering process". Public schools should be stripped of their status, which would force many to close, while more and more pupils should be attracted away to tertiary colleges.

The conference narrowly voted in favour of a Ministry of Youth. A lengthy solution demanded a national programme for youth to be run by a ministry, and by local government youth departments.

Delegates also decided to set up a joint Liberal-SDP working party on inner-city violence. A resolution on community relations called for policies to preserve family life, to reduce violence on television, and to improve news coverage.

Report recommends urgent reforms Call for streamlining of book orders and supplies

Urgent improvements in the efficiency with which school books are ordered and supplied are recommended in a report from the book publishers this week.

The committee was set up by the Booksellers and Publishers Association and chaired by Baroness David to look into the way books are selected and supplied to schools and colleges.

The committee was not asked to comment on the amount of money schools had to spend on books, but its report notes that according to the Educational Publishers Council, four million fewer school books were bought in the first nine months of last year compared with the same period in the year before.

The report also follows the HMI survey of the effects of local authority spending cuts on schools which described the worn-out and out-of-date books many schools had to rely on, poor school libraries and the severe textbook shortages that made it difficult for some schools to set homework.

In her preface to the report, Baroness David says "With so little money available it is obviously even more important that teachers and librarians should be able to select books after thorough consideration and that delivery from publisher to supplier to school should be speedy."

She was surprised that after recommendations by the Bullock Committee (on reading), the Taylor Committee (on school governors) and the National Book League working party that there needed to be a national standing committee to review and make recommendations on the levels of capital allowances, especially as they relate to book purchase, no action has been taken.

The David Committee called for central analysts and advice on spending levels for local authorities. The most generous were spending more than twice as much per pupil on

books as the meanest.

The report recommends that when putting out the supply of school books to tender, local councils should give priority to the quality of service suppliers could offer. Educational needs should not be subordinated to purely financial considerations, and more than one supplier meant a better service.

Authorities should also ensure teachers were properly advised on which books to order. Book displays should be arranged for them and teachers travelling to displays, exhibitions or bookshops to look at books should get expenses.

Schools should also have a say in the books ordered for the school library service and consider these books as complementary to their own stocks.

Councils and school budgeting should allow ample time for the selection and ordering of books.

Authorities should also make allowance for the books teachers need for their own professional reading. The Supply of Books to Schools and Colleges, published by The Booksellers Association and the Publishers Association.

●Action to improve the supply of books to schools has been called for by headteachers and librarians.

A statement issued jointly by the National Association of Teachers, Library Association and School Library Association says: "We warmly welcome the report of the Lady David Committee and would like, as a result, to see effective action taken by local authorities to ensure that teachers and librarians have the necessary facilities to select and order books efficiently and easily."

The three organizations endorse the committee's recommendation that the quality of the overall book supply service should be regarded as more important than purely financial considerations.

Surrey to act on sixth form crush

Surrey County Council is to open 10 additional teachers to its sixth form colleges.

Unemployment and private fees have forced student numbers to fall by about 10 per cent. There are 1,100 more in the college than expected, and hundreds have been turned away.

Uniformity ends

Sheffield's Labour-controlled education committee has decided to end the rule making school uniforms compulsory - in spite of a referendum of teachers and parents, which showed a majority against it.



OUTDOOR
Details of Lancashire Textile Co. varied and exciting range of outdoor clothing for 1982. General introductory course in the Primary and Secondary schools. Selling, canceling, reducing, all special expeditions, saving. That little bit more adventure. 8 day Saturday - Saturday 8.00 - 10.00. 9 day Sunday - Sunday 10.00 - 12.00. 10 day Monday - Monday 10.00 - 12.00. 11 day Tuesday - Tuesday 10.00 - 12.00. Includes full board, instruction, equipment hire and in-course training. All staff free plus 10% basic. For information of all 1982 courses visit: Neil Brinkshaw, Lancashire Textile Co., Ardara, Cumbria. Tel: 0684 761710

who would have thought ...

... in the 40's when the recorder as an educational aid first appeared in any quantity, that a group of little infant children would take part in a national festival of music for youth, playing with such a spontaneity they would have been thought to score.

Yet that is what is happening today. Teachers of infants all over the country are taking advantage of the availability of the wide range of plastic recorders and are discovering the ease with which their pupils can quickly absorb the skills required to perform music in playing.

Originally recorders had been available to the chosen few who were prepared to pay high prices for hand made wooden instruments and who played in select ensembles. The development of the plastics industry put recorders into the price bracket of schools all over the world. The early plastic recorders were a source of trouble to teachers. How many teachers, just starting their lessons, experienced the annoyance of a child accidentally knocking the recorder off the desk on the floor, the recorder being unrepairable, pieces? Glue and tape rarely successfully saved the day.

There was the business of dipping the recorder in disinfectant after every class. It was very time consuming, and, to the children, a horrible task. However, despite the disadvantages, the recorder in class education rapidly caught on. In the 50 teachers were finding that their young pupils were quickly absorbing music, almost without thinking, and becoming literate while playing their recorders from the music.

Unfortunately, in some teachers' training colleges, there seemed to be a movement against "over-teaching" infants in music (or for that matter almost any other subject). I remember a young student friend of mine being severely criticized by her college supervisor for daring to teach her pupils the "Theory of Music". All she had been doing was to teach the children to play untuned percussion instruments from the blackboard, using normal notation and French time signs. The fact that the Headteacher in the school was so impressed that she was allowing her teachers time to attend the student's lessons for observation was to no avail with the supervisor. She insisted that the student was oversteering the children beyond the point that infants should be extended.

Fortunately these days the motto seems to be "the child is the limit" when it comes to musical development of young children.

All that is required is dedicated and skilled teachers, who are prepared to put in a good deal of time and effort over and above their normal classroom quota. And all over the country these teachers can be seen, busily and happily holding their recorder clubs in the school hall or after school. The results of their diligent and enthusiastic can be seen and heard in their school concerts, festivals, and ultimately in the Festival of Music for Youth.

Certainly there is no sign of stress or over-education of the infant children. They are enjoying themselves; they are proud of their work and they bring joy and happiness to their teachers and the parents in their audiences.

Most of all they are being given the "Open door" to musical knowledge in the basic learning of music notation learning, but without the drudge of the arithmetical dreary theory lessons.

Teachers welcomed the arrival on the scene of inexpensive wooden recorders, mass produced, and less unbreakable than the early plastic ones. They learnt to put up with this

early unwooded joint threads, the ease with which mouthpieces could be chewed and the way that the window quickly deteriorated when left wet after performance. Those teachers with good discipline and organization made sure that these faults were never allowed to appear.

More and more children brought their own recorders and looked after them, but the trouble and minor recorders were still made of the troublesome breakable plastic.

Then upon the scene appeared the Aulos Recorder. A few were taken to a school in South Essex, where they were given a real testing. They were compared, in sound and ease of playing, by a group of Junior children with their own miscellaneous selection of wood and plastic recorders. The children were unanimous that the new Aulos recorders were far easier to play and sounded better. Teachers standing around agreed. A decent recorder was given to a group of boys and they were told to break it. They had lots of fun jumping on it, throwing it against a brick wall and banging it on their desks. It did not break, but it chipped slightly.

With the appearance later on of the wider range of Aulos recorders the whole world realized that there was the answer to a problem that had been recording teaching all along. The children were far easier to play and sounded better. Teachers standing around agreed. A decent recorder was given to a group of boys and they were told to break it. They had lots of fun jumping on it, throwing it against a brick wall and banging it on their desks. It did not break, but it chipped slightly.

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ADVERTISEMENT



Recorder Group at TOWERS INFANTS SCHOOL with thanks to Headteacher: Mrs. Greenwood and Music Teacher: Mrs. Mumford.

The modern plastic recorders, of which Aulos are such an outstanding example, are available to all at an inexpensive price relatively and consequently are to be seen and heard all over the world.

To return to the infant group who will be giving their performance at the National Festival of Music for Youth. They have a dedicated teacher, an enthusiastic Headteacher and they enjoy spending a lot of their free time learning to play together so well. To everyone's surprise children have been found, who, even at the age, have the necessary finger span to tackle successfully the tenor recorder.

For part arrangement made by the teacher are thus assured and the overall sound is excellent.

When I was a student at teachers' training college (yes, they were known as that then) we had a college revue. One of the sketches in the revue showed a couple of parents, sitting outside an operating theatre. Both were showing signs of considerable anxiety. The door opens and out comes the surgeon. "You can stop worrying now," he says. "The operation was complete success. Your daughter will never play a recorder again."

Since those days the progress has been immense. The recorder has become almost the most important instrument in musical education. Together with the members of the Officium, musical education at all levels has really taken off. The children can perform their own accompaniment to their songs and do not any longer depend upon the teacher on the piano. The recorder, however, remains the

least expensive and easily obtained real musical instrument which is capable of playing music at all levels of attainment, from the simple tune of the infants to the vastly more complicated contrapuntal music found in secondary schools and Youth recorder ensembles.

Children who really shine at recorder playing give the teachers a clear indication that they are capable of progressing to more sophisticated orchestral or band instruments and a great deal of wasted time and disappointment is thereby avoided.

The recorder has gained honour and respectability in the educational world and Aulos, among others, has played its not inconsiderable part. Instrumental music, once for the select few, now embraces millions of young people throughout the world.

Norman Dannatt has been actively involved in musical education for many years and is a former Music Adviser to the Borough of Havering.

HISTORY OF THE YOUNG RECORDER PLAYERS OF LONDON...

The Young Recorder Players of London were formed in 1975, partly as an outlet for my own arrangements, but also because I felt the Recorder was capable of producing music beyond the "Greenleaves-type" tune with which it had become firmly associated. The sound we produced during the first few meetings in 1975 was so unexpectedly good that I felt a public concert should follow as soon as possible.

I booked the Purcell Room at the South Bank in February, 1976, and to our astonishment all tickets were sold in four days! I was obliged to put the concert on again a few weeks later for the parents, most of whom hadn't managed to get tickets the first time.

Encouraged by such enthusiastic response we followed this by an even more ambitious concert the following year, this time in the Queen Elizabeth Hall. We played to an almost capacity audience - over 800 seats were sold.

In July 1978 we travelled to Bristol to give a concert to 400 school children and in July 1979 we were finalists in the National Festival of Music for Youth held in the Fairfield Halls, Croydon. From there we were invited to perform at the Schools Prom in the Royal Albert Hall, and our performance there was later shown on television and broadcast on Radio 4.

In May 1979 we were invited to perform in Hyde Park as part of the Great Children's Party - one of London's major contributions to the International Year of the Child, and in July of the same year we were again finalists in the National Festival of Music for Youth. However, the highlight of 79 was undoubtedly our highly successful concert tour of Germany in July. It was

The Young Recorder Players of London in concert at the Fairfield Halls - Croydon. Brian Davey says of Aulos "... their consistency of tonal quality make them ideal for ensemble and group playing ..."

well attended and much acclaimed by the German press, and our year ended with a fund raising concert of Christmas Carols.

The first part of 1980 proved somewhat frustrating due to fruitless attempts to organise a trip to Holland and Germany. We gave two concerts on behalf of FCN Music at the British Music Fair at Olympia in August, and were invited to take part in the prestigious Woodburn Festival in September. The year ended on a very high note as we gave our second Queen Elizabeth Hall concert in December and this time played to an audience of 1,000.

Unquestionably 1981 has been the Group's best year, to date and it is not yet over. It began with a guest appearance in February in Islington Town Hall as part of the Youth Helps Youth Show. This was followed in April by a highly successful week long trip to Dubrovnik in Yugoslavia where our four concerts were enthusiastically received by the press and the public, one concert being broadcast by Radio Dubrovnik, and there are strong possibilities that we will be invited back to Yugoslavia in 1982 - a suggestion put forward by the organisers. In addition throughout the first half of the year several concerts were given in Buckinghamshire and Berkshire, and one in University School,

Hampstead. We were again finalists at the National Festival of Music for Youth in Croydon and won a Highly Commended Performance Award. I am to appear at the Schools Prom at the Royal Albert Hall on November 22nd.

On November 22nd St. Cecilia's Day - the Patron Saint of Music! we have been asked to give a charity concert at Slough to raise funds for the Sir Malcolm Sargent Children's Cancer Research Fund, and on December 8th we shall give our first concert involving the group's soloists and small groups jointly. This will take place in London's Purcell Room. The next full group concert is planned for March 7th, 1982 and once again this will be held in the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Brian Davey



School to work

The careers service is rapidly becoming politicized. The annual conference of the Institute of Careers Officers at Manchester this week sounded at times like a curtain-raiser for the Labour Party at Brighton next week. A few short years ago the careers departments were the conservative wings of the education service: they saw

themselves as serving employers and the national economy as much as the young. But this year delegates vigorously applauded a succession of speeches which attacked not only the government's current economic strategy but the whole economic system. They blamed the Government and British capitalism for creating

unemployment both by deliberate intent and by failing to invest in this country's industry; and their main panacea was indistinguishable from those spelt out in Labour's alternative economic strategy. Part of the change is due to the retirement of many of the old-style careers department chiefs and their replacement by a

more radical generation. But rank and file staff themselves say that their attitudes have been changed as a result of mounting the front line in the fight against youth unemployment. They and their chiefs now see themselves primarily as champions of the young against an increasing hostile

Edited by Mark Jackson

'Subsidy jobs' may include training

The CBI may ask the Government to make training a condition of the subsidy it is planning to offer employers who take on school leavers from next January.

Under the scheme, employers will get £15-a-week during the first year of the young person's work if the pay is less than £40 a week; and half that if the pay is between £40 and £45. Supporters of the scheme maintain that it will bring school leavers' pay closer to the rates they get in countries like Germany and France, and make them more attractive to employers.

But the scheme is arousing strong hostility from the unions and youth organizations, and career officers, who fear that they may be given the task of administering it throughout the country.

It was the chief topic in the corridors and bars at their annual conference at Manchester this week.

Delegates applauded Mrs Pat White, head of the Inner London careers service and the new president of the Institute of Careers Officers when she told Mr Brian Rigby the CBI's deputy director general, who addressed the conference, that it

would bring "very small companies creeping out of the woodwork" to get young people on the cheap and a subsidy without giving anything back to the country in the form of training.

She warned Mr Rigby that the unions and others were so incensed by the proposal that it might become impossible to go on running the Youth Opportunities Programme - "which is not very good but it's all that we've got".

She urged Mr Rigby to get the CBI to put its weight behind demands that the subsidy should be paid only to those companies prepared to offer training. Mr Rigby said he agreed that the subsidy could hardly be justified without such training, except perhaps where it enabled marginal companies to operate and create jobs; and conceded that in return for lower pay, French and German youngsters got a guaranteed training. He promised to do what he could to try to get training built into the scheme.

But some careers officers pointed out afterwards that in almost all the industries where effective training

arrangements exist, there are agreed wages that are already above the subsidy level.

Mr Rigby told the conference that while progress was being made on the schemes like the Confederation of Understanding British Industry project to improve liaison between industry and the schools and to help teachers understand a working world most of them had never experienced, much still needed to be done.

Although it was a pity that the Government's new training initiative proposals for vocational preparation and the reform of industrial training had become bound up with the future of the training boards, it also provided an opportunity to get the whole framework right once and for all. The CBI had an important role to play in reforming apprenticeship but the effectiveness of any reform would depend on the renegotiation of collective agreements.

"The debate over the future of industrial training boards has thrown up major discussion about the institutional framework for training," he said. "Unfortunately much of the discussion has revolved around the

question of who should pay the cost of winding up many of the present training boards as well as the cost of funding the survivors."

CBI members favoured voluntary alternatives to the boards, but it was only if those alternatives were convincing that the Government would give them the go-ahead. "We can no longer duck the issue of proper training of people for and at work," he said. "We are not only talking about school leavers but also those who go on to further education. We have to try and ensure that despite the present situation we do our best to maintain training programmes."

But, he added, the preparation of young people for working life could not be treated as though it began at 16. It involved a continuing process starting no later than 13 and a close partnership between schools, further education, and industry was vital. Schools should not attempt to provide vocational training but a vocational emphasis of a general kind was needed to provide a base for what followed. It might involve technical colleges during the last year at school and the first year at work."

Unite with the young, delegates told

A call to careers officers to throw their lot with the young to change the social system was made to the conference by its retiring president Mr Kevin Devine. Mr Devine, the education officer in charge of careers for Cambridgehire, made the proposals in a speech which fiercely criticized government policy towards the young and towards local authorities.

Teachers were beginning to find that many pupils could see little point in trying to benefit from education for a life on the dole, he said. Their increasing alienation had undoubtedly contributed to the recent violence in the inner cities: while some people wanted to meet it only with counter-violence others more insistently advocated helping the young in order to preserve the existing fabric of society.

"There is every risk that the careers service could become an agency used to syphon off this resentment among the underprivileged - resentment which might otherwise be expressed in either constitutional or extra constitutional activity directed against society."

There was a third choice, said Mr Devine - to do something to enable the young to help change the fabric of society. He said that the local authorities could play a key role here both in education and in employment if they were allowed to do so instead of having their autonomy cut back by restrictive legislation increasing centralization, and financial sanctions.

He said: "For too long we have assumed that employment services and training are a national enterprise. I believe that it is now time to assert the case for a much more active role for local authorities."

No careers, no careers officers ... ?

Careers officers are likely to find their jobs disappearing because of inevitable changes in the future pattern of work, they were told. "You will probably end up as working life counsellors or something of that kind, because careers as we know them are on the way out," suggested Mr Bernard Dixon, director of the Institute of Personnel Management. The principal aims of the schools will now, he said, had been to inculcate the work ethic. That concept would now quite clearly have to be rethought.

Instead, the new task of schools would be to prepare citizens for a flexible working life and a flexible lifestyle in which he suggested the job of houseperson "might not be allowed to say housewife" might become a paid and properly valued one.

Schools would need to "circumvent" expectations with reality and not lead youngsters to expect that they could settle down to the rest of their lives. Education would have to become part of adult life and the would mean a modular system with different learning.

United States/Deborah Kasout

Planned cuts in food programmes bring protests from nutritionists

WASHINGTON: The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has proposed changes in the national school breakfast and lunch programmes which could mean many children paying more money for less food. This follows the demand from Congress to cut more than \$800 million from child nutrition programmes.

The proposed regulations, which the USDA claims could save school districts as much as \$190 million a year, have stirred concern in Capitol Hill and drawn strong opposition from consumer and nutrition organizations.

"We are witnessing a callous, apparently deliberate attempt to destroy the child nutrition programme. I don't know how else to interpret the department's action," Mrs Nancy Amodei, executive director of the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), said.

The nutrition schemes, which include the national school lunch and breakfast programmes as well as child care food programmes, currently serve more than 27 million children, many of whom get free or reduced-price meals. The USDA is responsible for their administration

and the Secretary of Agriculture is required to set minimal nutritional requirements for the meals served.

Many of the USDA's cost-cutting proposals aim to cut back on reporting and record-keeping at the local level, but the proposals which have sparked controversy are those that redefine the Federal child nutrition standards. Under the new plan, the changes include allowing nuts, seeds, yogurt or tofu (soyabean curd) to be substituted for meat, whole-grain doughnuts or biscuits for bread, and in a departure from its traditional two-vegetable requirement for the standard lunch, condiments such as relish or ketchup can be regarded as one of the vegetables.

In addition, the size of portions served to younger children would be reduced. Whereas high school students would continue to receive two ounces of meat or meat substitute and eight ounces of milk, meat servings for elementary students would be reduced from two to 1.5 ounces. And milk would be reduced to six ounces for elementary students and four ounces for pre-schoolers.

"There is no question that the health and nutritional status of children is being compromised. We do

not believe the department has looked sufficiently at other possible cost savings, as the Congress ordered," Mrs Amodei said.

Indeed, when Congress reduced child nutrition spending from £2.5 million to £1.7 million for 1982, in addition to cutting federal lunch subsidies, they instructed the USDA to find more ways to economize "without impairing the nutritional value of such meals". Department officials claim that given the three-month deadline imposed by Congress, they had no alternative but to seek savings by reducing portions and allowing substitutes for certain basic foods.

"We feel we are in a fairly defensible position," Mrs Mary Jarrett, Assistant Agriculture Secretary for Consumer Services, said. "These proposals are only minimum requirements the states must meet to get government re-imbursement, they are free to supplement."

"We have had a traditional goal of meeting one-third of the daily nutritional requirements of children. But it is a goal, not a regulation or a law."

The USDA will have the chance



Less meat for the young eaters?

to defend its proposals during three days of education sub-committee hearings scheduled this month to examine the proposed revisions in the nutrition programme. During the first day of the hearings, Representative Carl Perkins, chairman of the House Education and Labour Committee, said the proposed regulations may be illegal. If nutritionally unsound meals are served, the regulations would not comply with the National School Lunch Act. Both opponents and the Government will produce witnesses from the nutrition and medical professions to defend their positions.

The good living guide of the 1920s

OKLAHOMA CITY: Vocational education students who were tearing down part of a basketball court at Rush Springs High School, south of Oklahoma City, as part of a remodeling programme for their school, discovered a time capsule dating from 1928.

It contained a list of "Essential Health Rules for Schools", which included "a full bath once a week, long hours of sleep with windows open from the top, much pure milk, but no coffee or tea, and eat but little meat."

The last-mentioned should not have been too difficult for the teachers. As well as the other material, a teacher's contract was contained in the capsule and it listed a salary of US\$80 a month (\$20 at the then rate of exchange).

Unless required by the Oklahoma Historical Society, the documents will be displayed in a glass case in the school hallway.

P. E. Burke

Shared work schemes mooted

A scheme for school leavers to share apprenticeships and other training jobs in industry is being worked out for consideration by ministers. The plan is for youngsters to spend half their time at work and the other half on the dole.

The idea comes from the Institute of Personnel Management whose members run recruitment and training in most of Britain's biggest companies. They say it could make a big contribution towards solving the country's apprenticeship crisis.

The institute proposes that youngsters should be recruited in pairs for each training vacancy and spend either half a week each at work or alternate weeks. They would be paid at ordinary apprentice or training rates for the time they worked and would be allowed to draw supplementary benefit for the rest of the time, during which they would probably be expected to attend colleges.

A scheme which goes part of the way towards this is already working at OEC telecommunications at Coventry. Youngsters work half a paid week each until a full-time job comes up but do not get the benefit of that day; they are not working.

Bring in the HMIs, youth inquiry urged

The Department of Education and Science Inspectorate's role should be extended to cover the youth service, a government inquiry was told this week.

Effective monitoring is needed to end the big inequalities that exist in youth provision between different parts of the country, said the National Council of Voluntary Youth Services in its evidence to the Thompson Committee which is reviewing youth services in England.

The NCVYS, which represents youth organizations working with six



Training today, working tomorrow? The shape of the future?

The scheme has already been discussed in principle by the institute with Sir Richard O'Brien, chairman of the Manpower Services Commission, and senior officials from the Department of Employment and the Department of Health and Social Security. They have told Ministers that the institute is working out the details for a programme to cover 20,000 youngsters. Mr Bernard Dixon, the institute's director, said this week that it would require changes in the rules governing supplementary benefit but it was possible this could be done without legal amendments. A national youth training scheme would probably be easier if

the youngsters worked alternate weeks.

The Government contribution, said Mr Dixon, would be limited to making available the equivalent of 10,000 training awards, the grant it pays to employers to train apprentices under conventional arrangements. At present more than 30,000 training places are being maintained by such grants.

Mr Dixon claims that the institute's plan could eventually help in ensuring a supply of skills for the future.

by the local authorities and the voluntary sector are still failing to work as partners.

Council funding for voluntary youth work is subject to changes in council staff and in political control of the authorities. Consultation with the voluntary organizations on planning is rarely more than token.

The NCVYS wants a mandatory obligation placed on local authorities to provide adequate funding for youth services and for white counties and metropolitan districts to be required to set up joint committees of

their own youth departments and the voluntary organizations to plan and monitor provision.

The authorities, it says, should also have a duty to promote local youth councils of young people who should be represented on the committees.

The structure which the NCVYS is proposing was put forward in last year's Youth Bill, a private members' Bill which failed despite all-party backbench support because of government opposition. The present inquiry into the youth service was set up by the Government to placate their own backbenchers.



Young people must learn the purpose of the army, ministers say.

Bid to boost Army image under fire

BERLIN: The main German teachers' union, GEW, has responded angrily to proposals for improving the image of the German armed forces (Bundeswehr) in schools put forward by two state Education ministers. Herr Frank von Huer, a union spokesman, accused the ministers of having "the sensitivity of elephants" for expecting teachers to use lessons for "Bundeswehr propaganda," when pacifism is under such wide discussion in West Germany. Two Social Democrat education ministers, Herr Hans Krollmann and Herr Juergen Giesecke, have also rejected the plan.

Among the suggestions by the two ministers Herr Mayer-Vorfelder and Herr Giesecke, both members of the opposition Christian Democrat (CDU) party, are regular school visits by members of the armed forces and more emphasis on military and security topics in history and social studies.

They say they should understand the point of military service and the necessity for defence preparation, according to the new German Basic Law, and to decide whether or not to decide to serve. The collective responsibility of national service was one point stressed in the Basic Law.

Worried by increasing pacifist tendencies among young people, the Federal Minister, Herr Hans Apel, has asked state education ministers to consider ways of informing young people about the armed forces.

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France/Barbara Cassassus

New climate of peace as school year starts

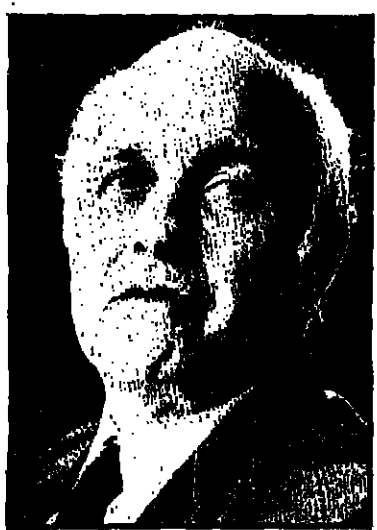
PARIS: The new school year has started this month in an atmosphere of unusual calm.

In the past the return to the classroom has been accompanied at best by a mood of discontent, at worst by a wave of teachers' strikes and other forms of protest. But apart from the odd incident all is quiet.

M. Alain Savary, the National Education Minister, and several union representatives have pointed out that fundamental problems have yet to be solved but a number of urgent interim measures have been taken to permit a peaceful return to school and prepare the ground for future reform.

Teachers and parents are showing confidence in spite of concern that not all the new measures will have their full desired effects and relations between unions and the Government are set on a sound basis for cooperation.

Generally, the unions endorse the Government's action so far, with reservations, and appear intent on helping propel further change while retaining their independence. M. Jacques Pompidou, general secretary of FEN, the umbrella organization for 47 teachers unions, said: "Permanent consultation between the unions and the Government has



M. Alain Savary: highlighted problems

created a new climate. . . If the return to school is calm it is because teachers understand real change is in progress".

The most noticeable and immediate change is the creation of about 7,000 new posts in primary and secondary education in addition to the 2,400 planned by the previous government.

Of the total 5,443 posts are for primary teachers whereas none was budgeted for originally, and more than 5,000 are for secondary teachers, to add to the 600 planned initially.

Another 17,000 posts will be created under the 1982 budget, some of them to be taken up at the beginning of the year. As 39,300 fewer children are expected at schools of all levels this year than last - the rise in nursery and secondary pupils offsetting the sharp decline in those attending primary schools - the new posts are helping reduce class overcrowding and to resolve one of the bitter points of contention with the last government: primary class closures.

The new posts together with other increased resources are not to be spread evenly however. Each local education authority has been instructed to identify and concentrate on "priority education zones" according to certain specific criteria.

These include areas which are culturally deprived, where the school dropout rate and number of pupils falling behind are high, and where there is a large immigrant population. These zones especially should benefit from the development of ex-

tra curricula educational projects in secondary establishments which are designed to break down the barriers between learning inside and outside schools.

Likewise, the time devoted to physical education and sport has been extended.

In a first move towards integrating secondary auxiliary teachers into the education system and giving them security of tenure, the local authorities have also been instructed to reemploy all those who were employed last year and to avoid recruiting more to replace absent permanent staff. There are around 40,000 auxiliaries many of whom are accustomed to spending long periods without work and have been passed over for permanent posts when these become vacant.

Not all the new teachers of this school year have been initiated by M. Savary. Some were planned by his predecessor and are going ahead without modification. This is the case with the introduction of the new stream first year of Lycée (second stage of secondary education), postponing specialization in the arts or sciences for a year.

The 15-year-old pupils, limited to a maximum of 34 a class, take the

same main subjects with a choice of options including languages and technology.

As some parents feared a bottleneck in admissions to the new stream classes they enrolled their children in technical secondary schools (LEPs) where a shortage of at least 40,000 places has emerged. That is one of the few difficulties arising so far.

Looking beyond the logistics of the new academic year one of the most delicate questions confronting M. Savary is how to bring the public sector. A major issue in the run-up to the legislative elections in June (TES, June 19) it has been the subject of intermittent polemic outbursts. The Minister remains firm. Determined to avoid another "school war" he is adamant that a solution will be found through negotiations and not unilateral decree.

Another question promising to be a topic of some debate is the role of parents in their children's education. M. Savary has called for greater participation which has received a mixed welcome. Unions are in favour of a closer parent-teacher relationship but are against "parental interference" in teaching methods.

Australia/Bill Purvis

Basic standards maintained

Critics of the Australian education system are surprised to learn that there has been no decline in basic educational standards in the past five years.

A national survey of the "three Rs" among Australian pupils from 10 to 14 reveals that standards may have improved slightly since 1975.

Commissioned by the federal and state ministers for education the survey is in response to well-publicized claims that schools are producing semiliterates and innumerates.

The Australian Council for Educational Research, an independent body, handled the survey.

The same body conducted a similar survey in 1975. Comparisons show, among other things, that girls were markedly better than boys in reading, consistently better at writing and at 10-year-olds were better at maths.

About 10,500 pupils in govern-

ment and private schools were surveyed.

One surprise was that Australian children in the 10-14-year-old age group compared more than favourably in reading ability with children of the same age in other English-speaking countries.

According to the survey the standards in some areas have improved quite markedly in five years. For example, in 1975 86 per cent of 10-year-olds succeeded in the assignment of writing a personal message. In 1980 the success rate was 93 per cent.

Education ministers in two states welcomed the initial publication of the figures. Queensland's minister, Mr William Gunn, hailed it as a significant indication of the improved skills of Australian pupils. And Mr Paul Landa, the New South Wales minister, said he hoped its publication would put paid to the myth that educational standards of young Australians were declining.



An Australian teacher reports on a pioneering experience in China

Soul of Mongolia

Every year the Australian Federation of Teachers sends six teachers to China for three to five months. In September, last year, I was one of three teachers sent to Huh-Hot, the capital of Inner Mongolia, where I stayed for just over four months. We were the first foreigners ever to work there and the introduction of foreign experts was to do with the implementation of more liberal policies with the fall of the Gang of Four.

Huh-Hot is the capital city of Inner Mongolia and was a city of 100,000 in 1949. It is a city of great contrast. It is called attractive. In fact, Inner Mongolia is considered to be one of the poorest parts of China and to have among the worst conditions.

Many of the local Chinese want to leave but are not allowed. Winters are very dry and very cold. But spring is apparently the worst season because of dreadful yellow dust storms from the Gobi Desert.

There is a very big pollution problem because there is no grass (the Chinese have pulled it all up - they think it harbours mosquitoes), there are very few built roads, all heating and cooking is by coal, and houses are small and tight, so that smoke pouring out of the chimneys stays close to the ground.

All these factors combine to make

Huh-Hot one of the most polluted cities in China. Many people wear gauze masks when the cold weather sets in to avoid breathing the polluted air that contributes to many forms of illnesses.

Our students were of three types. Scientists endeavouring to learn spoken English so they could go to the United States for further study; fourth year language students; and teachers who were endeavouring to improve their English abilities. Heavily Chinese, they were mostly in their late 20s or early 30s. Most of them were bilingual in Chinese and English. English is given top priority as a subject.

Our workload was heavy. Although officially we were teaching only 12 hours a week and giving one lecture, there were many other demands on our time. Altogether we were working about 32 hours a week apart from lesson preparation.

Some classes were very big. They could be as low as 15 or could reach up to 60.

Chinese teachers, in contrast, usually only work six to eight hours a week. Day-to-day living is time-consuming and this cuts down the number of hours which are available for working. There are no conveniences such as washing machines or refrigerators.

And there needs to be time in visit

and chat with friends. As a nation the Chinese are gregarious and find it almost impossible to understand that sometimes people can enjoy being alone.

They continually seek out the company of others and we found ourselves surrounded by curious questions. Most of the time we were besieged by people anxious to meet us and to talk to the foreign experts.

Although the Chinese are used to very orthodox teaching methods they readily accepted any innovations which we brought in and loved the new materials we had brought from Australia.

We had several class excursions on our bicycles and I was astonished at their excited reactions. Apparently, even although they were all adults, it was a completely new experience for them and something which brightened up their rather dull lives. We also produced class magazines which were something else completely - a novelty for them.

I used straightforward teaching English as a Foreign Language tech-

niques, functional notional methods, situational, language experience and role playing to extend their abilities with English.

The more advanced students adored any form of English literature, poetry or even songs, and were fascinated at how often the concept of love was repeated. Virtually no Chinese have any religious beliefs so it was all completely new, and they asked many heretical questions.

The relationship we all enjoyed with the students was the highlight of my trip to China. Our visit was a new experience in their lives because most of them had never met, let alone spoken to, a foreigner.

They frequently invited us into their homes and in the evenings would come to visit us and just chat and ask us about the outside world. On the odd occasion I was sick, the

entire class visited me bringing me fruit and flowers and on Christmas Day they used their bikes to bring me a tree to the university for me to sit under on a day when I would normally be with my family.

Thinking back on my China experience I see some of the problems as being the tricky negotiations with the Chinese authorities and the heavy workload. On the other hand I remember the wonderful experience of seeing China as a tourist and of being invited time after time into Chinese homes, or taking time into the Chinese countryside, to remember skating with my students on the frozen lake, and long and interesting conversations where I learnt more about China than I ever could from a text book.

Allison Hewitt

Letters

Rose-coloured picture of comprehensive progress

Sir, - Once again The TES has accepted at face value the rose-coloured picture of progress towards comprehensive education (September 11) that the DES puts out every year.

We challenge it for the following reasons: ● Selection to maintained grammar schools may be down to 4 per cent but it has been augmented during the last decade by government and local authorities purchasing places in independent schools. Statistics on this are not available. If they were, "grammar" selection would shoot up to 10 or 15 per cent in many areas, and the significance would be obvious.

● Selection of this kind will soon be forced up another 2 or 3 per cent when "assisted places" gets underway. This scheme will have the dubious honour of a) extending selection to 13 and 16 as well as 11, and b) spreading it across the whole country, so that areas free from selection for a decade or more will have it reimposed.

● Official selection still takes place in some comprehensive systems, where schools are divided into

selective and non-selective comprehensives, incredibly enough. In some areas as little as 20 per cent of the age group gains entry to the academic "comprehensive", yet these schools are defined officially as comprehensive.

● Unofficial selection takes place in comprehensive systems, often by mis-use of the mechanism of parental choice. This selection is possibly the most serious, precisely because it is the most hidden. It would include schools in both voluntary and county sectors in certain areas, and its fastest growing part could turn out to be entry to mushroom sixth forms and sixth form colleges.

● Lastly, selection still takes place inside individual comprehensive schools themselves. This includes schools which still select for their own sixth forms (by requiring X O levels for entry); and, of course, there is selection by previous attainment for all GCE courses at 13-plus in almost all comprehensive schools.

The GCE is an examination devised entirely for a grammar system, and if readers don't think selection for its courses, often done inside indi-

vidual subject departments, is really selection of the same kind as selection at 11-plus, we suggest they talk to teachers in hundreds of schools up and down the country who will tell them that thousands of pupils and their parents experience it as just that.

Since the start of the comprehensive reform in 1964, all governments, aided by the DES and abetted by journals like The TES, have been able to get away with presentation of comprehensive "progress" using the minimal criteria still being applied.

The Campaign for Comprehensive Education suggests these hide more than they reveal and that they have come to the end of their useful life. We suspect selection will get worse before it gets better, but we do not doubt that eventually it will be phased out by popular opinion, accompanied by more informative and detailed criteria to help us judge progress.

CAROLINE BENN
Right to a Comprehensive Education
36 Broxash Road London SW 11.

Oxbridge firsts

Sir, - Philip Venning's article on Oxbridge firsts in relation to award winners (September 11) raises many issues. At a time when many Oxford and Cambridge colleges are considering the future of open awards it is valuable to have some data - however tentative - provided in this way. More research needs to be done.

In the independent sector except for three or four schools, there is no such thing as "the third year sixth". There is the seventh term i.e. one term beyond the two years of A levels. Results at Oxbridge vary from year to year, from school to school and from scholar and commoner entry. Examiners and admissions tutors are eager to obtain pupils with ability and the best potential for growth. Ultimately it is simply a matter of how pupils - whatever their background - are taught at school and university. Depending on this, some will do well and others will not. High expectations, family deprivation or over-indulgence, late development, and over-feeding intellectually can upset all sorts of apple cart. So can statistics. Your article indicates that Dulwich is still out of line. We at UCS feel that nine out of 10 is better than 10 out of 26!

No matter. There are fascinating things to investigate - day schools, boarding schools, parental support, pupils' attitudes, the attitudes and expectations of admissions tutors at Oxbridge, and also of course what pupils of today do with themselves and their predecessors of the 1920s and 1930s have done with theirs.

Although the selection of information and the interpretation offered seem biased towards "still out of line" at Dulwich College, within the criterion of the article Dulwich actually does rather badly. The statistics presented are in direct contradiction to the picture caption. The article says rather faintly that these figures have to be treated with the greatest caution but it still goes on to draw unjustified conclusions from them. All conclusions are irrelevant unless like is compared with like. The students listed as "firsts" were not necessarily those who had previously gained awards.

The whole article is based on unquestioned and questionable assumptions, eg that a first at Oxbridge is both the ultimate academic achievement and a relevant criterion against which to measure other educational variables such as school teaching methods. The article assumes that the result is a reflection of some quality of the school (eg cramming) as distinct from the qualities of individual students or their social backgrounds.

One can guess that the independent schools listed are as unrepresentative of the group as the maintained ones. One can also guess that the social intake to Guildford RGS, a maintained school, is very similar to that of many independent schools not too far away. There is a

certain irony that Hills Road Sixth Form College is in Cambridge! What then is the contrast supposed to mean out of earshot of the student bar? The sloppiness of the underlying thinking defies analysis.

More to the point is a comparison with the group of maintained schools described in the lead article in the same issue. No Dudley schools appear in Mr Venning's list. For instance the King Edward VI Sixth Form College, it appears, is being deprived by cuts of appropriate text books, library books, furniture, and equipment and non-teaching staff. Quite different social values seem to be at work, and I would suggest that the social schizophrenia involved in differential judgments about Dudley, and, for instance, about the Independent/Oxbridge relationship is both anti-educational and damaging to our nation's future.

DAVID JARMAN
Champion Institute of Higher Education

Pursuit of leisure

Sir, - It was with increasing incredulity that I read "Just the job" by Mary Warnock (September 11).

To think that there are still people, in this day and age of increasing unemployment, who consider the Welfare State provides adequately for those who choose not to work. That young people today no longer need to consider full time work as they can obtain temporary, casual work enabling them to pursue whatever it is they really want to do.

Mary Warnock is correct in saying unemployment is his hardest at the unqualified but this is not, as she suggests, primarily because people are not qualified fully to enjoy their leisure. Rather it is because enforced leisure leads to financial disadvantage, a sense of hopelessness and depression.

Unemployment is not, as suggested by Mary Warnock, conducive to becoming "confident, competent and capable of pursuing the things you really enjoy and think worth doing for their own sake", unless you have an independent income.

I would agree, therefore, that schools do have tremendous responsibilities, but would add that these unfortunately amount to far more than ensuring that young people leave school prepared to enjoy their leisure.

B. A. MILLER,
58 Cambridge Road,
Ilford, Essex.

If there is a sound psychological or educational argument for the preservation of this system we do not know it and yet we refuse to change.

For more than 20 years we have seen proposal after proposal for the replacement of A level, and all have been rejected by the universities, the conservative teaching profession and a British feeling that we tend to stumble on the truth which other more thoughtful nations miss. It is time to question that complacency.

The sixth form has changed in size and composition, but A level has hardly changed. In 20 years we have divested ourselves of an Empire, we have seen our industrial strength crumble, we have entered the EEC and we may be seeing the end of the two party system as we have known it, but A level survives. Can it be maintained to the end of the century? I am afraid it can.

E. H. S. DILLON,
Headmaster,
The King's School,
Tynemouth,
Tyne and Wear.

Taken as read

Sir, - I write to correct statements made by Mr A. Williams in his article "Mathematical Teaser" (September 11).

There are indeed diagnostic screening devices for the early detection of number difficulties and effective teaching support services developing by experience and experiment to build up a body of good practice.

The screening procedure adopted by Doncaster Education Authority identifies children with special needs in both literary and numeracy. Once identified, a team of 40 peripatetic remedial teachers begin intensive programmes of work based on further investigations into both reading and number difficulties.

When teaching mathematics to such children with learning difficulties there is a tremendous need to build up confidence and ensure progressive development on a sound conceptual basis. Mr Williams says that this cannot be done by remedial services on, if done, it could be counter-productive. The Doncaster experience shows otherwise.

Remedial education needs to concentrate itself with the whole child and the total curriculum, not just reading.

F. J. McDERMOTT,
Teaching Support Service,
Doncaster Education Department.

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Jacqueline Penrose taught for four years in comprehensive school.

Street-wise or School-wise

How have this summer's street riots affected relationships between teachers and pupils? Saville Kushner and Tom Logan report on the views coming out of one comprehensive school in Merseyside



What, in the aftermath of Toxteth, Moss Side, Brixton and Bristol, is the data base of social studies, humanities, and citizenship for youngsters who view with cynicism the promises of liberal democracy? The riots offer evidence of a growing gap between the experience and assumptions of teachers and taught. When the riots came, they came to Toxteth rather than Kirkby. It is eight miles from Toxteth by road, but culturally it is a much longer journey. The majority of "rioters" appear to be male - but the girls have their own distinctive viewpoints. Maureen, a 17 year old school leaver, explains:

"Do you notice in Kirkby, there are no coloured people. That's because they're all in Toxteth - they've all been put there. And it's true when they all come over - well, when I say 'they' all come over - I'm not racist - but - they're all stuck there, aren't they? 'We'll have youse there and we'll have you lot there' - they build towns like Kirkby and Skelmersdale to get people out of the inner-cities - and yet all the coloured people are still there - living in, practically slums, some of them."

"What makes the riots different in Toxteth from Kirkby?"

"I don't know. I've never been there."

Ten to fifteen years ago Kirkby was notorious for having the highest birth rate in Europe, and an escalating crime rate, especially among "juveniles". Kirkby has had more than its share of fighting and vandalism, but the girls insist that the community was stabilized, that the myth of Kirkby (the "Ponderosa") was outdated and perpetuated by the media. But fourth-year girls talked to us about the amount of under age drinking, and of the "loads of girls just left school having babies".

They too want to explode the myth, but they see the gains of recent years being eroded under the increasing stress of unemployment. Many say that the trouble stems from the Government, or the council - "It's not our fault, there's not'n here", rather than the kids themselves - "They've got not'n better to do". But as long as it's recognizably local, spread

over time and attributable to Kirkby boredom, Kirkby unemployment and Kirkby lack of facilities, it is at least tolerable.

Such an intense loyalty to Kirkby serves to engender a mistrust of outsiders: media, police, social workers (and researchers) and southerners in particular, who are seen, in combination, to maintain the myths. And so the loyalty holds a curious mixture of defence and attack, hope and despair, escape and return. "Why is it when you think of something good to do, people ask you 'is that a way out?'" Yet the loyalty worked in Kirkby - there the few barricades were dismantled by the mothers, and the kids taken off the streets.

For two teachers who run a special unit in the school which teaches largely through discussion, the cultural distance is protective:

"Each morning, after a riot, we'd come in and talk about whether or not we should discuss it. The kids were excited. What we thought was that if we did discuss the riots with them while they were so animated, it might encourage them to 'own' the experience. You see - we didn't want to bring it into the classroom."

The most common reaction from the girls is, in any case, unsympathetic to the "rioters". This is partly attributable to a intolerance of the boys' regular fighting. Then there is the sardonic criticism of "rioters" vandalizing their own districts.

There is also the pragmatic view that they are only fighting the police, "and you know you'll never win the police". According to the teachers, what little open sympathy there is for the kids on the streets comes lower down the school, from the first years.

It was when the riots moved to Kirkby that the two teachers felt they could no longer suppress the discussion. When they introduced it to the class it was couched in the necessary warnings about getting involved.

Elsewhere in the school there had been occasional discussions in class. The only formal curriculum response was a daily input to morning assembly comprising advice to the older girls, and warnings to the first-years to stay in at night and not to be "swept along by it".

"I really warned the first-years because there had been a bad night just before and they were rather excited about it. I warned them that they were to stay in that night - I was that definite about it - I'm not usually."

That was the head - understandably reluctant to confront the issue immediately. The school year was running down - staff were busy winding up and preparing for their extended break from the year's pressures. In any case, to defer until next session any discussion that might carry a residual impact of the riots would put the students "at a distance from what happened", and would allow the teachers to consider the issues "in more depth".

Like the Government - who also might sense the need to include the riots in their curriculum - the first reaction is to contain. The consequences of the riots materialize fast - maybe too fast to allow for effective consideration of the issues. But there is a sense in which schools would find it hard to take time off from coping with an endless stream of pressures for long enough to identify issues.

So when you talk to teachers about the riots, they respond with anything from comment on the recent street disturbances, to perplexed renditions of how schools are changing in ways they can barely understand. When we asked one teacher about the impact of the riots on his school, the question merely triggered more deeply-seated concerns:

"I find this in school, and I suspect it's from the community as well, we get this sort of invention of right and wrong. I find, more and more, that I am the one who is put in the wrong. Now I'm perfectly correct they'll either dispute a fact or they'll dispute an attitude - they'll dispute something... I'm made out to be something a little bit to the right of Hitler with 'Oh God - all those teachers always on at us - always picking on me!' - and all I'm trying to do is teach."

This particular teacher was nervous of discussing the riots with some of his classes - although he wanted to - fearing that class harmony was too brittle to withstand it. And by any modern standards, this is a well-behaved population of students, enjoying notably warm relationships with the staff.

There are, then, good reasons for teachers maintaining a respectable distance from the riots. But will the school escape entirely the special consequences of these street riots? What happens to their students? Maureen was

confused. She easily condemned the rioters - principally for bringing "shame" on Kirkby. But she had residual feelings. Why?

"Because it concerns us. Because there's been a label put on the people that's causing the riots - and we fit into that label."

"What's the label?"

"Youth. I mean - that's us all over isn't it? I mean, you can't help it, like. You were born in 1963 and you're in 1981 and you're 17 years old. You're part of it."

"Do you mind being put in the same category?"

"I don't know. I mind in the sense that there's a small minority causing the disturbances. But I don't mind in the sense that they're causing the disturbances for a good cause."

It is confusing, and there are many contradictions. Perhaps when Maureen speaks with her other voice - condemning the rioters - she is seeking that same distance which offers protection. Hence, for her, as for others in the school, the Kirkby riots were minor events and the work of "copycats"; while the Toxteth riots were significant social events - but somewhere else.

Whether the riots recur or not, the conditions and attitudes which underpin them will persist, and school students will experience similar events either directly or vicariously through the media. How can schools respond?

Most of the teachers in this school live outside Kirkby in more "salubrious" areas, and only experienced the riots vicariously. Few had any contact with them whatsoever. In one class discussion, a group of girls were treating the teacher and the researcher as naive. The naivety may be a legitimate sanctuary where the issues are too hot to handle.

But will the problem be that the gap between teacher and student experience grows wider? These girls are in close touch with reality, which seems to be ever further removed from schools; teachers may find it increasingly difficult or uncomfortable to confront "real" issues. At the same time, teachers are urged (particularly in a careers education context) to encourage a sense of "realism" in their students.

As ironies overlay each other we might come to question assumptions about student "alienation" rooted in an era when jobs were available and schools were worth not being "alienated" from. There is an increasing sense of students having exclusive access to the reality of being young. The girls we talked to live in council houses; their "jobs" belong to a government agency and are "on loan"; their views and opinions are increasingly the property of the pundits and the media.

Learning about such things you become "street-wise". Meanwhile, teachers - salaried, mortgaged, controlling the agenda of class discussions and beset with contemporary demands of school - stay school-wise. It is that distance between the street and the school that is highlighted by events such as the riots.

When the education authorities in Manchester suspended "Police Week" in schools, what was being suspended? Do students need to go into school during the day to learn about the police? They would, in any case, go home at night to learn about the police on the streets and on the television. Where is the "real" curriculum?

The government is set to release money to schools which might otherwise have gone to youth opportunities. Are we about to witness ROSLA revisited? If we are, what have we learned about the problems and failures that become associated with the seventies "buzz" words such as "relevance" and "meaningful" applied to ROSLA curricula? In times of social stress and high pressure in schools, the Humanities Curriculum Project is still regarded as threatening.

At a time when society wants to "refrigerate" youth, curricula which are "meaningful" and "relevant" have a tendency to raise the temperature - and if the temperature is not raised in school, there is always the "street curriculum" on offer to the students. We couldn't properly handle ROSLA when there were still jobs. Now there are no jobs and evidence of rejection of vocational education ("meaningless" and "irrelevant"). The seventies saw schools threatened with a curriculum taken over by central authority. Perhaps the eighties will see the threat closer to their doorstep.

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One step forward, one step back

Roger Murphy suggests that the proposed common exam at 16 plus could be as divisive as the existing dual system

The dual system of O level and CSE has posed a variety of problems for teachers, schoolchildren and their parents. Perhaps the most extreme has been the pressure put on teachers to categorize children, at an early stage of their courses, as either "O level candidates" or "CSE candidates".

In the 1980s, all of these problems will disappear with the advent of the "common examination at 16-plus". Or will they? Will this "knight in shining armour" really put right all the evils of the present examination system? Even some of those who were originally strong supporters of a single system, having seen the results of some of the early parts of the preparatory work, are beginning to fear the worst.

Much time so far has been spent on deciding how the existing GCE and CSE boards should be combined. Some sort of solution to this problem may have been reached, but the time spent does not augur well for the most serious educational concerns, of producing common syllabuses and examinations that will cater equally well for all of the candidates who will soon be entering for this new examination.

If the common examination is really going to start functioning in the 1980s, then a whole number of decisions will have to be made in a very short time. These decisions relate among other things to the range of syllabuses that will be offered, and the contents that will be prescribed for each of them. Already the cry has gone up that the common examination is to be used by the DES as a backdoor method of imposing their otherwise unpopular blueprint for a highly restricted school curriculum.

That is one issue which we will undoubtedly hear much more about. There is, however, another issue which is less frequently discussed, but which may be just as serious. This relates to the examinations themselves.

It seems to have been fairly widely agreed that many subjects will need more than one examination paper (or set of examination papers). This approach, which involves offering a range of examination papers, or other types of assessment that have been set quite deliberately to present different levels of demands to candidates, is new in British examinations.

At a superficial level, many will see such a system of "differentiated testing" as the ideal solution to the problem of examining the attainments of children - who possess a wide range of ability. Differentiated tests do, however, add problems to the ones examiners, examining boards and teachers are accustomed to dealing with.

Many who have considered the use of differentiated testing have talked in simplistic terms about producing an easy paper, a medium-difficult paper and a hard paper for each examination. Usually this is linked with the proposal that all candidates do the medium-difficult paper along with one other paper. However, it can be questioned whether this model can really be applied to 16-plus syllabuses, where in practice each syllabus is usually assessed by examinations with something between two and four quite different components.

For example, in modern examinations, where in many cases there are up to four separate components, each component may need to be offered at three different levels (easy, medium and hard). If so, will all candidates be required to attempt all four components at two different levels (medium plus easy

or difficult), and therefore have to attempt eight separate tests?

If such an approach is followed, we could end up with a system of examinations that requires candidates to spend a great deal of time being assessed, much of which might be spent attempting papers at an inappropriate level. Even more worrying is the prospect of examinations with perhaps as many as 12 separate papers or different assessments.

Another problem is whether the candidates will be left to make the choice between the papers themselves, or whether it will be made for them, by their teachers or parents. It is quite likely that the differentiated papers will test quite different skills and abilities in a number of subjects, and teachers will have to decide at a fairly early stage which papers to prepare children for.

If this turns out to be the case, one must ask whether one has gained much by moving from a "dual system" of examinations where different groups of candidates follow different syllabuses and take different exams, to a so-called "single system" where different groups of candidates still follow different syllabuses and take different exams.

One answer that might be given is that, although different groups of candidates will undoubtedly be allowed to take different examination papers within the so-called common examination, there may still be some common parts that will be done by all candidates. The supposed advantage is that these common parts will be used as a basis for scaling marks gained on the parts of the examination that will not be taken by all candidates.

Again, this is very attractive superficially, as it provides a possibility of a solution to the difficult problem of grading candidates on a common grading scale, when the candidates have been allowed to choose easier or more difficult examination papers. However, anyone with experience of statistical comparison of scores on different educational tests and examinations will know what a minefield this is.

The recent arguments among statisticians about how to compare the results obtained from the Assessment of Performance Unit tests provide further evidence of this. Even the GCE boards themselves, in their comparability research studies several years ago, reached a point where they decided to abandon a similar type of statistical method. Surely these and similar previous experiences would convince anyone of the folly of building a new national examination system on a shaky foundation of statistical moderation techniques?

It looks very much as though different groups of children will still have to be divided up for different courses and different examinations. After that has happened, the wave of a statistical magic wand is hardly likely to convince anyone about the equivalent value of the single set of grades that will be awarded to all of them. Furthermore, in curriculum terms it looks as though there will be far less choice! This could lead to teachers having to choose courses that are less well suited to their children than those that they were able to follow previously.

All in all, the new 16-plus examination does not look promising at the moment. And soon it will have gathered so much momentum it will be difficult to do anything about it.

Roger Murphy lectures in the Department of Education, University of Southampton.

Talkback

Poor showing

Anne Willer

I have recently finished a three-year BA degree course at the London School of Economics. During my stay I became increasingly aware of the lack of commitment of the majority of the teaching staff.

The reality was far removed from my high expectations of the school which, on the whole, has a very good reputation. Classes and lectures were frequently cancelled, as the lecturer concerned was researching or lecturing elsewhere.

For example, during my second year I had to attend the third year translation class during the summer term. Very little work had been done in my second year class all year, as the lecturer only came to the college to take us at 5 pm, after having done another job in a bank. Not surprisingly, she was tired. Consequently, she was not prepared to continue with this arrangement during the summer term. After all, she said, we could afford to miss a term, as we were not in our final year.

In my final year another lecturer announced at the end of April that he was taking a month's sabbatical in May to do some research in France, and there would thus be no more lectures before the June examinations. Due to previous absence several lectures on his list had not yet been given, but no attempt was made to find a substitute.

This particular person had also cancelled all teaching on the second day of the summer term (Thursday) because, term began on a Wednesday, and he did not agree with three-day weeks (in spite of the fact that he had just had a six-week holiday).

Similarly, I was amazed at the small amount of work that had to be done. In the final year I attended college for only six hours a week, and was set a total of three essays all year (compared to 16 set for a friend at Nottingham University).

One lecturer allowed us a term (10 weeks) to complete an essay that was not to be any longer than four sides!

Sometimes essays were not returned to students for several weeks after being handed in for marking, as was the case with one four-sided essay given in November and returned in January.

On one occasion I had to ask for a translation to do over the Easter vacation, and the tutor concerned said: "Quite frankly, I've nothing suitable to give you at the moment." I picked up a book on his desk and asked if I could use that.

Throughout the course I noticed a complete lack of interest in teaching, with the bulk of the lecturers' energies concentrated on their personal research. As part of my course we had to write a 10,000 word report. For those spending a year abroad it had to be submitted as soon as they returned.

Yet none of them had even started it at the beginning of the final year. However, nobody seemed to mind, nobody "checked them up" about it, or complained when they gave it in the following May. I know several students who submitted no work at all before the exams and passed.

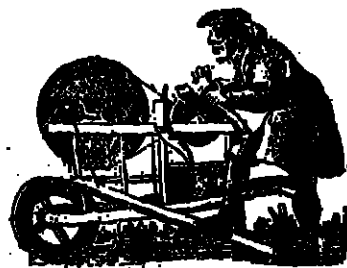
The staff did not seem to expect us to do the work they set, and considered it a bonus if we did. Lack of enthusiasm for teaching was often coupled with complete lack of interest in administrative details, as was the case on the part of the lecturer who, when I asked him if he could find me a copy of the 1979 examination paper for his subject, replied, laughingly: "No, I think I've thrown them all away."

Mt tuition fees were paid by my I.e.a who I am sure did not get value for money for the standard of teaching I received. Had I bought an article of a similar standard I would have returned it to the shop.

I did not expect to be "spoofed" seriously, but I did expect to be set a reasonable amount of work, and to be chided to some extent if I did not complete the assignments.

Instead, I was confronted for the most part with nothing short of incompetence, and felt that I could have done just as well had I found out what was on the syllabus, studied solely at home, and just come into the college to take the examinations.

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Axe-grinder

Rough cuts

Things out of place are a constant threat to the order of every school. That part of the Breakthrough to Literacy kit marked "Lost bits" grows steadily as the year progresses, and is perhaps a rough indicator of the efficiency of the teaching and learning.

The entire infant school grinds to a halt if the maths equipment or PE kit is "lost" or randomly distributed among the pupils. "What do you mean you've lost your pilmoolls again?" I hear the headmistress bawm, (as if the child could ever answer that extraordinary genre of teacher/parent questioning. Another example is: "Do you think I'm made of pencils?"

"Now, where do you always look for lost things in school?" In the tidy box, miss, is the ritual and dutiful answer. The "tidy box" (kept in the stock-room) is a tea chest full of dirty and decaying pants, vests, jumpers, socks, broken binto, crumpled projects on canals, etc., which the hapless infant is now required to search, disturbing as he or she deives a variety of smelly layers which fill the air with distilled essence of Ox-fam shop. We retreat to the staff-room for we too feel out of place.

In infant classrooms, the obsessive labelling of objects "teacher's desk", "hutch", "wall", "window", "corner for shoes", "busy bag", can disguise itself as a gestal aid to literacy. But teachers give the game away.

"What are these, children?" "Scissors, miss", they chorus. "And show me how we carry them. . . that's right. . . And where do we put them?" "In the scissors box." The kids chant again. This last sentence occasions the production of the appropriate slotted wooden box (prominently labelled) with which the "putting away" of a pair of scissors is deliberately and dramatically demonstrated.

In secondary schools (notably in home economics, metalwork, woodwork, science labs and the gym) a similar taxonomic and storage ritual can assume para-military proportions.

While I was listening to the headmistress of our favourite little C of E school, a teacher interrupted to ask where spare batteries for the tape recorder were. "Don't you know? They're in 'Ties for loan' box," came the reply.

Years ago pupils who, through real or selective amnesia, forgot to wear a regulation school tie, used to be paraded before the Headmistress. After the requisite lecture, she required them to choose a crumpled example from the box to get them fittingly through the day.

(On another occasion, the hamster's food was to be found in the "Hymn tapes" box, giving me further indication of that school's priorities, and the heady pace of educational change.)

Later the same day, I watched one teacher's beautiful nature table - full of lovely objects breathing the essence of spring - being moved "out of the way" into the boys' toilets (smelly and dank, despite the Head's constant efforts with I.e.a disinfectant and her blue rubber gloves), because the church jumble sale needed the space to raise money (for royal wedding mugs for loyal parishioners). Not even the hardest of springtime objects (nor indeed imaginative teaching) survives in that dismal environment.

For all their power to label and control, words themselves have a worrying habit of being out of place, especially in the secondary school, whether it be along creeping into the elevated English essay, slogans upholding the British Movement, or scribbles depicting the sexual proclivities of the staff.

In Culture and Anarchy Comp., graffiti is/are like the greenfly in my garden: it (they) always come back, and quickly. Even the alienated I.e.a.

recently downed tools in exasperation when the wall they had painted before lunch was re-daubed with spray-can slogans before they'd finished their last fish paste sandwich.

But the graffiti that really disturbs the hierarchy of this school are examples such as "The headmaster has lost control of the pupils of this school," and a 100 foot slogan along the school wall: "Pigs in the street: teachers in the school." What riles the teachers is not the sentiment, but the high level of literacy, well beyond that of most of their CSE candidates.

They gaze apprehensively at the perfect syntax, spelling and punctuation, but especially at the use of the colon. Which pupil ever uses a colon?

As an examiner, I can vouch for the unlikelihood of their pupils attaining this standard, and privately wonder whether a CSE in graffiti (or graphic communication in public places) would not be a greater stimulus to real literacy. The more cynical suspect these sophisticated slogans are the work of certain disenchanted and radical members of staff.

A greater threat to the moral order comes not from human artifacts but from the human beings themselves. No pupil may even get a glimpse of the interior of most staff-rooms. On the door of one "masters common room" is the inscription: "No boy may knock on this door. Wait."

The presence of a policeman in Culture and Anarchy Comp. is an instant frisson round the school, at least among the laid-back English department. (Teachers in the sim-pigs in the school!) Here, there is now "no-go" areas for staff too.

Inexperienced members of staff are advised to give the alleyway behind the gym a wide berth. The sounds and smells of the basement corridor - dirty toilets, lingering smoke (some of it tobacco) and the throb of reggae from the adjacent "sixth form room" - proclaim a world alien to the teacher, and one that is entered at his/her moral and possibly physical peril.

In spite of all the egalitarianism and cooperative learning espoused in the school's publicity, staff and pupils seem to remain "worlds apart".

Hakluyt's Voyages: A selection by Richard David. Chatto and Windus £12.50 0 7011 2533 0.

Geographer, linguist, historian, Richard Hakluyt was also Archdeacon of Westminster, diplomat, and busy advocate of Elizabethan seapower, overseas trade, colonial enterprise. Often considered chiefly as a maritime narrative, his great book, here most ably edited, introduced and glossarised, is an anthology of both land and sea travels, from eye-witnesses of most varied classes, ranks, occupations, involving Raleigh (as author), Humphrey Gilbert, Hawkins, Frobisher, Drake, and other names lesser but scarcely ignoble. Heroes, rakes, profiteers, zealots, desperadoes, all were space-invaders and, encountering so many strange peoples in different cultural strata, they were also time-travellers. Their assignments ring like antique gongs: Muscovy, Calicut, Bohara, Ormuz, Kazan, Astrakhan, Alexandria. They describe Persia, Goa, Venice, Jerusalem, India, penetrate Newfoundland, venture the Straits of Magellan and dare the Horn. Gilbert, significantly, spent two years preparing an expedition to find the North West Passage, yet failed, fatally.

The missives are primarily business reports involving the prospects of exchanging cloth, ornaments, general goods, for silks, jewels, spices, gold, together with reports of native conditions and Spanish hostility. But they are also sustained adventure tales with prodigious wealth of detail, bizarre, unexpected, horrifying or severely factual, inducing a vivid sense of small, precarious vessels and caravans dashing with so much temerity, uncharted hazards, whirlpools, rocks, tempest, disease, cannibals, like as big as beans, arbitrary fines, imprisonment, torture by capricious rulers, Moslem or pagan, and their extortionate officials: condemnation to galleys, mines, the stake, and crucifixion.

Famished sailors ate each other in Newfoundland, and, at sea plotted mutiny, or were agonized into respectful protest. "We have thought good to show unto you, being our Master, our whole minds and griefs in writing." But Raleigh himself cannot resist marvelous digressions, "though impertinent in some sort to my purpose", fascinated by reports of warlike Amazons at Tobago, men with eyes in their shoulders and mouths in their breasts, and an Arakanian drink powdered with the bones of great lords. Such incidents have won many readers. "Babylon is from hence fifteen days' journey, whereas by true report be great store of late." Curious human touches abound. "We had aboard us a Frenchman, a trumpeter, who, being sick and lying on his bed, took his trumpet notwithstanding, and sounded till he could sound no more, and so died." Then, "Divers women have such exceeding long breasts that some of them will lay the same upon the ground and lie down by them."

In Florida, a Frenchman saw a snake with three heads and four feet, unicorns fought lions, and more plausibly, "a friar, who, taking upon him to persuade the people to subjection, was by them taken, and his skin cruelly pulled over his ears, and his flesh eaten." Samoyed cannibals reversed sword-swallowing shamans. Ivan the Terrible's courtiers lengthened their hair when out of favour, so died. "Then, "Divers women have such exceeding long breasts that some of them will lay the same upon the ground and lie down by them."

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The Public School Revolution: Britain's Independent Schools 1964-1979. By John Rae. Faber £6.50. 0 571 11789 9.

This survey of Britain's independent schools in the period 1964-1979 (the subtitle is more accurate than the title) is constructed on a Toynbee model of challenge and response. The author distinguishes two challenges that faced those schools in that time: first the political challenge, and then that of educational and social change. Their responses were such, he argues, that in each case they "emerged from the testing time to all appearances stronger than before".

It is good that John Rae has written this book. He has himself played a leading part in both the responses he describes, though one suspects that his political role in the Headmasters' Conference has engaged him less than his creative role as headmaster of an exciting school.

What, however, of the vast majority without such connections? What is there here for them? Tantalisingly, John Rae does possess, as readers of his TES column will know, the requisite width of knowledge and sympathy to have broadened his canvas interestingly. Alas, he resisted the temptation. Yet the comprehensive schools during this same period have likewise had to face two challenges, one political, the other educational/social, and one may ask whether they too "have emerged stronger than ever before".

Politically speaking, the comprehensive schools in the seventies have certainly known what it is to have enemies. Those enemies have equalled in bitterness and exceeded in number the "enemies of the independent schools", and they have included a substantial section both of the intelligentsia and of the popular press. Admittedly, nobody has called for their wholesale abolition. But behind the demand for accountability has lurked the spectre of falling rolls, with the threat of closure for many individual schools. And if economic stringency has caused the independents to fear

Hakluyt's emporium

Peter Vansittart on an extraordinary piece of do-it-yourself history and anthropology



Caravan en route from Aleppo to Basra

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Challenge and response

J. C. Dancy on the public schools under fire

for next year's supply of pupils, it has caused the comprehensives to fear for today's supply of books and paper.

Necessity teaches the same lessons everywhere. The independents have long been careful of their relations with their customers. Comprehensives have recently had to master that curious genre of literature, the school prospectus; and they could still perhaps learn something from the independents about the art of writing school reports. Some of them indeed are realizing, not without qualms, that satisfied parents are also a potential source of extra revenue.

Have the schools "emerged" . . . stronger than before" from the political challenge? Comprehensives, yes. Already in 1981 there are signs that a new openness on the part of teachers and a new humility on the part of their unions are winning back friends: the low profile has paid off. The independents, according to John Rae, have gone about it the other way, with public relations receiving increasing attention. But it is hard to discern firm grounds for (political) optimism on their part. The only public event of the period was the abolition of the Direct Grant, and it would take a particularly myopic observer to see in that a source of strength to independent schooling. However the political analogy between the two sectors is not exact, and conclusions are almost as precarious as predictions.

Much more interesting - and much more closely connected with the nature and purpose of schools - is the response to "the challenge of educational and social change". Rae's chapter on this response falls into two main sections: his headings for them are "a question of relationships" and "the academic revolution".

Under the former he has no difficulty in establishing the transformation that has occurred during the period. The old shibboleths are almost entirely obsolete: flogging and fagging virtually gone; compulsion largely replaced by choice in matters of chapel, football and the cadet force; art and drama flourishing (as music always flourished); and above all personal relationships reconstituted on a basis of humanity rather than hierarchy. In short, all the schools have been liberalized and civilized, and the boys' schools in particular have benefited by their first steps towards co-education.

But at the same time there has, according to Rae, been a marked swing towards academic goals and standards as measured by performance in GCE. "As the schools became . . . more relaxed and informal in their life style . . . they also became more ruthless and single-minded in their pursuit of academic success". And the reason, he says, was first the need to compete with the grammar schools and then the desire to claim their inheritance.

Recent evidence shows how astonishingly similar is the response of the comprehensive schools in these two respects. Ronald King has surveyed some 45 secondary schools in the South West, repeating in 1979 the measures he used in 1969 to analyse school ethos. His figures are complicated by the fact that 16 of the 1979 comprehensives were "grammar or modern 10 years earlier, but the trends are unmistakable. Decreasing formality is shown for example by the decline from 49 per cent to 4 per cent of separate entrances for staff and pupils at assembly, from 36 per cent to 13 per cent in the authority of prefects to give lines, and from 62 per cent to 27 per cent in the existence of rules about hair-style. Boys and

or science have they none, but live most idly, sitting round in great companies in the fields, devising and talking most vainly." Venetian women wore shoes "very nearly half a yard from the ground." Cambians kept hospitals for lame dogs, cats, birds, and fed ants with meat. Royal Javanese wives when widowed were expected to undergo mass-suicide. Ralph Fitch had recognizable English disdain for an Indian prophet. "They took him for a holy man, but sure he was a lazy lubber." There are fearful accounts of storm, shipwreck, abstruse deaths, usually with notable absence of whining and self-pity, more often a stoic acceptance, or even rejoicing, concerning the inevitability and wisdom of God's purposes.

All this confirms Virginia Woolf's verdict on Hakluyt's collections: "Part of their charm consists in the fact that Hakluyt is not so much a book as a great bundle of commodities loosely tied together, an emporium, a lumber room strewn with ancient sacks, obsolete naval instruments, huge bags of wool and little bags of rubies and emeralds."

Yet there are sober matters of history and anthropology quite outside the lumber room. Robert Glanville, a sea-captain, reports satys and headless men, but quotes Pliny, Aristotle, Josephus, Philostratus, Gemma Frisius, Soline, Diodorus Siculus, an interesting comment on Tudor education. Contacts with indigenous peoples suggest less innate violence than general greed and fear, by no means obsolete. Hawkins used the *Jesus* as a slave! Spanish cruelty, prolonged and systematic, still astonishes and perturbs; like the Nazis in Russia, Philip's men forfeited much initial goodwill by mass-extirmination and bigotry. There emerges an accusing sense of missed opportunities. Europeans might have harmonized huge territories had their projects been less impelled by nationalism and religion, sometimes more intolerant even than the extremes of private profit. Inescapable is the universal relativity of religions, political notions, morals, values. The ubiquitous nakedness seldom seems erotic to these Elizabethan explorers, merely fellow humans seen in perspective, like the cow described by a modern child as "an animal with legs all the way down to the ground." There was not only savagery but amiable curiosity and reasonably honest bargaining.

Virginia Woolf disliked the effect of these exotic discoveries on English prose style, but, here at least, the style is remarkably even: plain, without the extravagances of many coeval poets, critics, literary men. It is surely part of a prose tradition direct, sometimes moralizing, and sometimes but usually precise, hard-hitting, stretching from King Alfred through Bunyan, Defoe, Cobbett, to Russell, Priestley, Orwell.

girls are no longer separated for subjects other than PE, and separate dinner queues and play areas dropped from 61 per cent to 34 per cent.

So far, so predictable. But King's enquiry also shows a vast increase during the decade in academic emphasis for example from 33 per cent to 90 per cent in the taking of marks for homework, classroom tests etc. King's evidence is corroborated by the record in the HMI Secondary Survey (1979) of the extent to which examinations dominate the curriculum of years four and five. And many comprehensive teachers will tell you, with greater or less regret, that they have to do it in order to show that they can deliver the goods as well as the grammar schools did.

Social pressures, then, whether from parents upon the work of the school or from younger teachers and older children upon its life-style, have made themselves felt right across the spectrum. The schools have responded, and by and large are the better for it. But are the independent schools stronger, as Rae claims? Not necessarily. It one has the political threat in mind. For in the eyes of their radical critics the primal offence of the public schools, that they exist at all, is merely compounded if they turn out also to be good schools. In a period when philosophers treat envy seriously as a motive for social action, mediocrity may be safer.

One last point. In a number of places, Rae observes that the changes in his schools during his period were not the product of any coherent philosophy or even planned programme. He seems to regard this as a matter for regret. He should not do so. Change in schools happens gradually, by shifts in the implicit consensus of the staff. It can be encouraged and articulated but rarely programmed or even accelerated. Schools in fact operate best not by revolution but by evolution. And if both sets of schools have evolved similarly in response to similar challenges, the chances are that both have done well.

network

■ The Community Education Working Party based at the School of Education, Nottingham University has produced a detailed and invaluable report on *Written Communication between Home and School*. It includes practical ideas about brochures, newsletters, forms and letters; suggestions about how to "portray the curriculum" to parents; and a section on cooperation between home and school over subject choice at the end of the third year. Copies (price £2.65 inc postage) are available from Publications Unit, School of Education, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD. Tel: 0302 361011.

■ The aim of many of the articles in the latest issue of *Multicultural Education* is to look at the "invisible racism" in the work of "some of those who have the best intentions in the field of race relations: eg. sociologists, researchers, teachers, writers, journalists". Of special interest to teachers will be the articles on "Multiculturalism or anti-racial teaching: a question of alternatives", by Pauline Hodgson and David Stewart. Copies available (price £1.50 from Jo Rex, Business Manager, 745a Finchley Road, London NW11 Tel: 01-435 0306).

■ "An Approach to Peace Education" is a folder of material for teachers, published by UNICEF. It contains detailed teachers' notes, suggestions for activities at the personal level, how to teach about the

arms race and disarmament, and the link between disarmament and development. There are also fact sheets, and an article entitled "Conflict Studies and Peace Education" by David C. Smith. The folder is available from UNICEF, 46-48 Canaburgh St, London NW1.

■ A free booklet on careers in archaeology, museums, and conservation has been produced by the Council for British Archaeology. Aimed at children, teachers and careers advisers, it explains what sort of jobs there are in archaeology, and the qualifications needed. A *Job in Archaeology* is available from the CBA, 112 Kennington Road, London SE11 (enclose SAE).

■ The latest issue of *Liberal Education* includes an appeal to teachers to contribute to a discussion on the possibility of radical activity in state schools for a symposium to appear in the next issue. There is also an article on the differences between liberal and libertarian education, plus the usual range of reviews and letters. (Copies available (price 40p plus 15p postage) from: 6 Beaconsfield Road, Leicester.

■ Apart from its customary extensive section of reviews, the sixth issue of the *Children's Books Bulletin* takes a critical look at the newly revised Ladybird Key Words Reading Scheme and the new Breakthrough to Literacy (L1). There is also an interview with the young novelist Susan Price, whose latest novel has just been published, plus letters, news and comment. Copies (price 60p plus 15p postage) available from: 4 Alderbury Terrace, London SW9 1NR.

One girl and a boat

Tu Hoa
This piece of writing comes from a seven-year-old Vietnamese girl, who came to England eighteen months ago unable to speak any English. For a year she attended a language centre part time; she is now a full-time pupil at Sale-the-Beeches Primary School, Trafford.

My name is Hoa. My name means flower. I live in a big house in Vietnam with my mother and my father and Binh and Quan. My grandmother lived near me but I have no grandfather. In Vietnam it was sunny. I can play out all day if I like. But one day I can not stay there because there was a lot of bombs. So one day my mummy and Daddy packed all the things that we need when it was dark. We went on a cart and a horse. We went on the cart for just one night. Then we have to walk. When it was morning we saw a river and we went on a little boat. We told the man we wanted to go and the man rowed the boat to a beach. Then we went out of the boat and my Daddy made us a tent out of some plastic. We stay on the beach for four weeks and wait for the big boat. When the boat came we couldn't go on it. We have to live in a house. We are not happy.

the house with five peoples it was not our house. Then we went on the boat. It was very crowded there was 200 peoples. There was one toilet. It was very frightened when I looked down the hole in the toilet because I can see the sea. It was very dirty and wet and it was smelly we have a little bit to eat every day and my Mummy had a little bottle for us to drink. We stay on the boat for two months. When we get to Hong Kong the wind blowing and it was raining and the sea was very rough and Quan was scared. We had to stop on a lot of boat to get to the land and then we were in Hong Kong and we was very happy. We lived in a big camp with lot of other people from Vietnam and then few day we move to other place. We lived in a quite big house and then we moved to lots of places. After the last place a policeman took us to a big lorry and then he took us to the airport. My Aunt and my Uncle and my Cousins were waiting for my family and my Aunt gave my Mother and my Father a big coat and a blanket for covering the children. On the way to England we went to India for some oil for the aeroplane. When we arrive to England it was spring time we went on a coach to Oxford. A English woman and a English man look after us and then we went to Sale to be our own home but nobody house. We went to Beeches school. I couldn't talk English properly and I was frightened of PE and the headmaster. When I went to school I went in a



Vietnamese families arriving in England from Taiwan in June 1979.

Greater London



SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE COMMUNITY PROJECT

Sadler's Wells Theatre has on its staff a Community Development Officer whose function is to promote good relations between the theatre and the local community and to take dance, opera, and ballet out into the community in new and exciting ways. The project is sponsored by B.P.

Although the project is for all sections of the Islington community and includes many varied events, educational opportunities arising out of productions at Sadler's Wells are of special interest to the Community Officer. She organises community based educational activities which currently include open rehearsals, workshops, theatre tours backstage, a youth dance week in conjunction with I.E.A., and an opera extract taken to a school for the physically handicapped. Future plans include lecture series, discussion groups, and a newsletter, as well as many other ideas. Your suggestions are equally important. The Community Officer is for everyone, so contact the Community Officer at Sadler's Wells if you would like to participate in any way or if you would like her to try and organise an activity with you in mind.

Write to: Fiona Charlton, Community Development Officer, Sadler's Wells Theatre, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4TN, or telephone 01-278 4563 ext. 22.

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regional theatre/leisure

Drop in on art

Victoria Neumark visits London community arts centres to see how they are meeting social and cultural needs

Every community arts centre is different. The Arts Council demands of an Arts Centre that it has a programme and policy for more than one arts form; that it has more than one space for artistic activities; that it has some professional artistic or administrative input; and that it is substantially used not only as part of formal education or adult education provision. A community arts centre chiefly differs from a civic or national arts centre in its accessibility to the demands of the interest groups in its area: it is a place where local people can directly affect what goes on.

The different sources of funds for community arts centres reflect the different services they offer. For the Arts Council, via the Regional Arts Associations, "multi purpose buildings are going to be most useful in times of economic constraint". Money is given for technical resources such as silkscreen printing, photography workshop, kilns, video camera; for touring performances and exhibitions; and for participatory arts workshops. Arts workers too may be paid by the R.A.A.

Local authorities are another source of income. They give money to amenities considered to improve the quality of life in the area. Since the buildings housing arts centres are frequently council-owned, upkeep and maintenance, and sometimes alterations, are often council-funded.

Community arts centres serve the community around them in a social as well as an artistic way. All the centres discussed below rented or provided free space for youth clubs, play schemes, mother and toddler groups and old age pensioner clubs. Local authorities and private trusts also give money for such activities. The Sports Council contributes to sports facilities at Jacksons Lane, for example.

It is in the educational sphere that the role of the community arts centre is hardest to define, but where community arts workers feel it is most important. "It's all educational," said Jude Kelly of Battersea. Yet where does adult education end and pottery classes at a centre begin to be community arts? Perhaps the greatest difference is the speed of response. Dance classes begun at Jacksons Lane by popular request are now accredited tea classes; Centreprise's Reading Centre grew in response to literacy inquiries. It is now funded by ILEA. The involvement of local education authorities in community arts centres is widespread and important. By paying sessional fees to tutors who keep the charges for classes within everyone's pocket, and by limiting this subsidy to classes of 12 or more students they keep the educational input related to local interest.

The much-debated schism between "centres of excellence" and community arts centres is then a matter of cost, responsiveness, and accessibility. Accessibility, in turn, comes down to education and locale. The two are mixed. As Jude Kelly points out, "could Picasso's Picassos come to the Battersea Arts Centre? They would certainly draw more of a crowd than 'Modern things no one's heard of'. The Hayward is too far off; not by a bus ride but by world view; a distorting mirror through which the Arts Council (in a recent working paper) sees the 'artistically underprivileged' working classes, who in turn see 'art as good for you and therefore in some way repulsive' (Jude Kelly).

The different ways in which the four arts centres discussed below have chosen to bridge this schism are but a bare indication of the range of community arts centres. For more information on arts centres in general contact the Arts Council, 105 Piccadilly, London SW (tel: 01 629 9495). The Arts Council produce a directory of centres and also publish a directory (£5.50). The Community Arts Officer in the Arts Council or

the local Regional Arts Association would be able to advise anyone wishing to try to set up a centre themselves. Battersea Arts Centre, Lavender Hill London SW 11. Funded by Wandsworth Borough Council (the landlords of the converted Town Hall), the Greater London Arts Association and various charitable and industrial trusts, the Battersea Arts Centre reopened in January after nine months' closure. Eleven full-time workers are led by Jude Kelly, artistic director, in an effort to make a credible and coherent Centre in the place of the previous, disorganised and "trendy" administrations of 1975-81.

The Centre, "the only cultural amenity of any size south of the river", offers a rich and varied programme of classes, performances, exhibitions and workshops. There is a pottery, silkscreen printing room, and darkroom. Cinema and theatre are run regularly in the old Chamber, as well as jazz, folk, rock and roll and classical music concerts.

Jude Kelly is keen on "muddying the borders", as so local groups and the Festival Ballet, the Puppet Centre and Shared Experience's luscious *Arabian Nights* show have all been found under one roof.

Jude Kelly feels that by trying to be too general and serving both the arts and the community it is possible to end up serving no one. So although local groups can rent space cheaply, there are no "purely social" meetings in the Centre.

The community which the Centre serves is poised between colonising middle classes on Clapham Common and vast council estates in Wandsworth Road and Clapham Junction. Jude Kelly freely admits the danger of middle class domination of the Centre, but is optimistic. "I don't think one can be paranoid and keep the middle class out. A community arts centre provides a place where the classes can link up, where an area going through so many changes can get an idea of itself."

Battersea's policy of linking up is tied to the marketing of specific products. Outreach work on the estates recently included a tour by the feminist group Spare Tyre with their play *Looking in the Mirror for Feelings*. Women who would never have come to the centre were interested by the play and discussion, and are to be involved in a forthcoming series of women's workshops (cricche provided) on self defence, movement and photography, with discussion. In these events Jude Kelly is in favour of "positive discrimination, to give people the confidence to come into a strange place like an arts centre".

Reaching out also includes liaison with schools. Though the ILEA is not yet involved in Battersea's extensive programme of classes (from life drawing to African dance and drumming, and from aerobics to recording techniques) the Centre does employ a part-time educational worker. So far 550 children have participated in an educational programme "serious but fun" in which a day's work on art, drama, writing, music and a mixed media project is blended with a filmshow and a classical guitar recital. Effort is all important; "the more demanding arts are, the more satisfying they are."

But Battersea is anxious to dispel the local image that art is something nice for the children. Whilst pointing out that "an arts centre must be a resource for schools and children" Ms Kelly wants to extend that "first taste of the arts" to as many as possible. Hence classes cost only 10p, or 10p for children. Membership is open and cheap. A café, and bar are open most of the day and evening.

The estimated 60,000 visitors a year who are involved in the Centre's activities, from the Old Tyme Music Hall talent contest in Pensioners' Week to the Teenage Cinema Club are involved in the flesh and blood of the arts. Jude Kelly sees the

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Continued from previous page

lan Trust has given money for a Community Development Worker for two years; and the Carnegie (UK) Trust has financed a Participatory Arts Development Worker (she is to teach in the area), also for two years. The Borough Area Community worker is closely connected (he used to be a volunteer in the bar) and the ILEA supports a number of classes, chiefly dance. The Arts Council gives money for performances of touring companies. The Centre's patronage by somewhat alienated youth in the area is reflected in this funding. From the very beginning of the Centre's life young people (who used to hang out in the derelict building) have provided problems and the impetus to tackle them. The new conversion giving easy access to the disabled will add immeasurably to the facilities, especially in the sports hall, funded by the Sports Council and the GLC, but the policy of Jackson's Lane that "nothing is laid on" as Nicky Gavron, unpaid secretary and trustee puts it, is unchanged. From the beginning activities have depended on community initiative, and been canvassed from door to door. What do you want in the building? is the question. Even when the days of mothers and toddlers on the altar whilst young people battled at ping pong in the nave are gone, Jackson's Lane will still be a place where classes are determined by social grouping, and not the other way about: Pensioners' Keep Fit, Children's Roller Disco. The building serves as a focus to the rather transient local population, more than a source of entertainment or education, though theatre and music performances, and movement, cookery and art classes have drawn people in. As Ms Gavron says, "an enormous part of people is the imagination, and one of the best ways of triggering the imagination is through the arts."

"Giving people opportunities to express themselves in every possible way" has given rise to an enormous amount of artistic activity, from the only children's shadow puppet company in England to advanced classes in Kathak Indian dance to workshops for children from special schools (funded by Capital Radio). There have been some failures - the car maintenance class stalled on only one engine, and some awkward moments - pensioners terrified of youth in the snack bar - but the atmosphere remains homely and positive. A bar and snack bar are popular.

"If only," says Nicky Gavron longingly, "we could have a Youth Worker. Improving facilities for youth is the first priority, but it is vital to have continuity of contact." Hoxton Hall, Hoxton Street London N1.

The work of Hoxton Hall is structured round its exquisite performance area. Built in the mid-nineteenth century as an unusual music hall which was to combine instruction with amusement, it has more recently been the headquarters of a temperance organization and the Bedford Institute, a Quaker and adult education body. Since 1975 it is unchanged. From the beginning workers have been running it as a community arts centre.

The ILEA, Hackney Borough Council, GLAA, the Arts Council and charitable trusts contribute to the running of Hoxton Hall. Classes in modern dance, art, pottery, crafts and literacy run regularly. The centre is used for free legal advice sessions, a pensioners' lunch and social club, a women's discussions group, Old Tyme dance, and clubs for children and teenagers. Since the full-time workers are qualified and experienced teachers who have been making plays by improvisation and discussion for several years, theatre in education is the natural bias of the centre, but it is not exclusive.

There is no bar, and the coffee bar is run by local volunteers. May Scott, who ran the Centre for 30 years, seems still to cast a whole-some influence. Terence Goodfellow, the director, says, "We've been here so long we're part of the landscape. People come here as OAPs who were here as kids. The tradition

of open doors and the creation of a community of interest continues. "People wander in, they talk to you, we don't have closed doors. If you don't do that you might as well go home."

Hoxton, still one of the poorest corners of the East End, was dramatically affected by the slum clearance programmes of the fifties. Families with more initiative tend to move out of "these bloody flats"; families in chaos remain. The Centre, with its playschemes and country visits, its numerous drama groups, fulfils a certain parental function. "We try to give them structure and boundaries, we try to involve them" says David Urie.

As ex-teachers, the Hoxton Hall staff are much involved with the local schools. For instance, a local school was recently reading the *Odyssey*. Hoxton Hall gave a presentation of the Greek creation myths; they followed this up with twice weekly visits to read the *Odyssey* in groups; finally all the groups put on a presentation in the Hall, to which parents were invited. Local schools' festivals of writing and music are coordinated through the Hall; local groups can use the space; local audiences fill the theatre for weekend performances.

Though so much activity in Hoxton Hall is drama-orientated, Terence Goodfellow feels that the most important thing "is to make relationships with other people. You can't do that in this air the arts are how you do it. Through the processes of improvisation and discussion you make people aware that they are capable of operating in a creative way. Lots of people don't know that until they've tried it."

David Urie agrees. "Artistic activity is the medium, but it's also a way of realising people's potential through any of the forms they take on, for them to explore in their own way." Centreprise, Kingsland High Road, London E2.

Centreprise's nine full time and six part time workers operate as a collective. The staff are all paid at

equal rates and on Mondays, when the Centre is closed, they all clean it, as well as having a staff meeting. This structure is more radical than that of the other centres discussed, and indeed Centreprise is a more overtly political place, not in terms of party politics, but in the sort of support given to the local community. It is financed by the London Borough of Hackney, the ILEA, the Arts Council and GLAA.

Centreprise's bookshop-coffee bar, advice centre, its publishing project, the classes run by the Workers' Educational Association and the offices of the Hackney Play Association, Hackney Under Fives and the 136 nursery have made it part of the Dalston scene for the last ten years. A Reading Centre and a space for serious youth projects and the occasional poetry reading, open office facilities and four rooms available for local groups to meet in free of charge complete the activities crowded into a small building.

It is really the conjunction of bookshop and coffee bar, which extends one way into the popular writers workshop and printing of work and the other into the relaxed atmosphere of the advice centre which gives Centreprise its flavour.

It's rather hectic, it needs money, the people in the area like and trust it. Whether playing draughts, looking at the exhibition in the coffee bar or joining in painting the mural, its users do seem to be in a community, from which artistic activity springs.

Enforced leisure, as it is politely known, seems to take its toll hardest on the young. All the workers I spoke to shook their heads over the alienation and apathy of many young people, who would pass their days glooming over coffee or lapsing into aimless violence. Television, the break-up of the family and street community as well as the economic depression were spoken of as causes. A community arts centre, then can be an educational project or a theatrical venue, a place to meet other people or a place to have fun, for creative expression or to come in off the streets.

Continued on following page

regional theatre/leisure

Mancunian roundabout

The recently opened Palace Theatre accommodates large-scale opera, ballet and theatre tours; regular visitors can purchase a discount card that allows reduced prices on all tickets bought within a year. (Box Office 236 992). The Royal Exchange has a season of some nine plays between September and July. A new scheme aimed at secondary schools allows priority booking for parties of ten or more, with price reduction on certain seats for any night of the week, while teachers can obtain guest tickets for public dress rehearsals to judge their suitability for school groups. Details from the party bookings organiser, (Box Office 833 9833; party bookings 833 9438).

The University Theatre in Devos Street houses both university productions and seasons by the resident professional company. Contact Theatre, whose work is aimed particularly at youthful audiences. Contact also run free Monday evening sessions for the 12-16, and 16 plus age groups, and Wednesday sessions on Street Theatre. There are also weekend and half-term workshops and drama workshops for youth and community workers, at a moderate cost. (Box Office 273 6592; community team 273 6539).

The Library Theatre Company presents repertory seasons in the central Library Theatre (236 7110) and the Forum Theatre, Wythenshawe (437 9663). Since they stopped performing GCE set plays, the most reliable source of these has been the Victoria Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, one of Britain's first theatres in the round, which also produces a number of interesting new plays. (0782 615962).

Continued on following page

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Heart of the matter

D. J. Hart on activities and attractions in the West Midlands

Cris-cross a map of the Roman highways with the lines of the winding medieval roads and tracks, overlay these with the canals and railways of the Industrial Revolution, then weave through and plaster over all our modern motorways, and you have a systematic but dizzy grid for the plotting of a picture of the West Midlands.

A Roman fort has been reconstructed at Baginbun, south of Coventry and up near Lichfield on Walling Street, now the A5, you can visit the settlement of Letchworth and go on from there to the larger remains at Wroxeter. For all post-modern times you can make a start with the Civic Affairs Unit at Coventry (0203-25555) or the Local Studies Department of Birmingham Central Library (235 4511). Birmingham Art Gallery and Museum's new Local Studies Gallery (235 2834) is also an excellent new focus.

That Museum's Science and Industry building (236 1022) has everything from barrel organs to steam engines, including some notable old cars, aeroplanes and motor-bikes. Whole museums are devoted to road transport in Coventry (0203-25555 Ext 2315) and Bridgworth (Brid 61761), where there is also one end of the Severn Valley steam railway (Brid 4361 or Bewdley 403816). Birmingham has a Railway Museum at Tyseley (707 4696). No part of Britain is more notable for its canals (British Waterways Board, 454 7091) and no part of this system more startling than the Dudley Tunnel, into which you can now go on barge trips. One basin open to the sky is called the Wren's Nest and somehow the only coral reef in Britain arrived there millions of years ago. You start this trip in the 26 acre site of the Black Country Museum at Dudley (557 9643), where a typical village with its shops and trades is being slowly but surely and devotedly gathered in and rebuilt from round about.

MUSEUMS
A place similar in concept is the Avoncroft Museum of Buildings (Bromsgrove 31886) where they have a working windmill and other farm and small industrial buildings on a 15 acre site. The one-time bishop's palace at Hartlebury Castle is now the Hereford and Worcester County Museum (Hart 416) with a fine collection of rural exhibits, including gypsy caravans. Of the various places that claim to have seen the start of the Industrial Revolution, Ironbridge (3522) and of course the bridge itself stake their claim with great style. The Bewdley Museum

(Unless otherwise prefixed, the above phone numbers are for the Birmingham area and from outside that area need prefixing with 021.)
Street has a collection of British and European art from the sixteenth century to modern times, and there are more examples of twentieth century paintings, graphics and sculpture nearby in the Gallery of Modern Art (236 9422 for both). The University runs the Manchester Museum in Oxford Road, covering geology, botany, zoology, archaeology and with an aquarium and vivarium (273 3333), and the Whitworth Art Gallery, with its collections of historic wallpapers, and textiles and embroideries from various cultures, as well as paintings, drawings, prints and sculpture (273 4865). Salford's Museum and Art Gallery in Peel Park, has British works of the past three centuries, and includes a collection of work by Lowry. (736 2649).

The Royal Northern College of Music in Oxford Road provides a range of concerts in its comfortable Concert Hall and Opera Theatre. Apart from the College's own productions there are seasons by the Manchester Camerata, a successful professional chamber orchestra, Northern Ballet Theatre, Mermaid Puppet Theatre and further performances of chamber music, dance, mime and new music, all listed in a comprehensive booklet (237 4304).

Young people can obtain large discounts on tickets for many musical events through Youth and Music in Manchester (Mrs P. Hill 465 6609). The City Art Gallery in Mosley

(Bewd 403573) is keeping local history alive in the old Shambles or Butchers' Market. Coventry's Herbert and Birmingham City Museums (tel. numbers above) are inexhaustible resource centres, and amongst Birmingham's outlying buildings are the Jacobean Aston Hall, the sixteenth century Blakesley Hall and the last surviving Birmingham water-mill, Sarehole Mill, becoming legendary as the likely model for Tolkien's Sandman Mill in *The Hobbit*.

CONTEMPORARY INDUSTRIES

Not so well known is the fact that a number of industrial concerns welcome visitors, normally by arrangement at fixed times. Minton (Stoke on Trent 4771), Spode (Stoke 46011), Doulton (Stoke 313041), Wedgwood (Barnston 3218) as well as the Gladstone Museum (Stoke 319232) in the heart of the Potteries will show you the work being done. In the Stourbridge area the glass factories of Thomas Webb (St 2521), Webb Corbett (St 5281) and Stuart and Sons (Brierley Hill 71161) offer hospitality. Newspapers often show people round and don't forget air-transport, such as Birmingham's, with their viewing galleries.

COUNTRY HOUSES, PARKS AND ZOOS

Transport nowadays means climbing into your car and going off for day trips to Warwick or the more ruined Kenilworth Castle, to Alton Towers - where the latest attraction is the helter-skelter Water Flume - or to the zoos at Dudley Castle, Drayton Manor Park or Twycross. More recently developed is the Safari and Leisure Park near Bewdley. Kingsbury Water Park, east of Birmingham, has been reclaimed from gravel pit workings.

TRAILS AND HOOF MARKS

Dr Johnson was not only born in Lichfield, he also travelled about the Midlands extensively. Charles II escaped his pursuers in disguise through Worcester. So far we can only guess where Shakespeare as a lad or successful gentleman adventured and strolled, but following in the footsteps of the famous in becoming a well documented leisure pursuit, as is following nature trails. Small wild and farm animals are being brought back into the cities in places like the Nature Centre off Cannon Hill Park and in urban farms like the one run in Balsall Heath by the St. Paul's Project (440 4376).

THE ARTS

All kinds of arts and crafts are carried on at the larger centres like the Midlands Arts Centre in Birmingham, (440 3838) where currently music under Paul Herbert is especial-

ly strong. He will soon be auditioning children to take part in two newly commissioned operas. Community drama, photography and much else is lively across the Midlands and impossible to categorise. Trinity Arts in Small Heath (773 7510) has started publishing local literary works. Barry Anderson has arrived at the Cultural Centre in Handsworth (551 4274) as an administrator and dancer to strengthen the black dance group, Kokoma. The three young artists of the Mural Company (455 8200) continue their important revival of public visual art with the completion of a second gable-end mural this October at the old Hockley Port canal-railway interchange, now a developing activities centre.

The Ikon Gallery in Birmingham (643 0708) is turning its education work in schools and in the gallery in the direction theatre has taken in schools these many years, with on TIE and Community companies and be among the best in the country. The Belgrade TIE (0203-56431) in Coventry, the Gazebo TIE in Walsall (Wal 613125), Platypus (359 5767) in the Black Country and Second City (359 5767) in Birmingham are the special cradles their young audiences are facing.

For young people to act or learn other theatre skills there are opportunities with the Belgrade Youth Theatre (0203-56431), the Birmingham Youth Theatre (440 3838) and with the Handsword Project, led by Banner Theatre (551 3671).

For mainstream arts the brochure of the Arts Centre of the University of Warwick (0203-417314) is nowadays always worth picking up for plays, dance, music or films. Plans for children will be shown during the half-term and before Christmas there will be world premiere productions of new plays by Eric Idle and David Wood.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The Arts Shop in Birmingham (60 2514) for current arts events; in the same building is West Midlands Arts Public Relations (643 6479). The Birmingham Information Office is 235 3411 and the Coventry office is 0203-20084. For everything from crafts to country houses, industrial archaeology to antiquities and nature trails, the Heart of England Tourist Board publishes excellent up-to-date material. P.O. Box 15, Worcester. Tel. 0905 29511.

Salford has a Museum of Mining which accepts school parties by appointment. It is set in a nineteenth century mansion house at Baile Hill Park (736 1832). Bury Transport Museum has both rail and road exhibits (764 7790) and is open daily at weekends and bank holidays. The Textile Machinery Museum at Tople Moor Road, Bolton includes machines by Crompton, Hargreaves and Arkwright (Bolton 21394) while Cronin's home at Hall Fold, Wood, Bolton is open on certain days. (Bolton 51159). The Western Museum of Science and Industry, Grosvenor Street, Manchester, covers many industries and there are occasional working days for its exhibits. (273 6630).

The National Trust owns Quarry Bank Mill at Styal, near Wilmslow. The mill and village are included in a 252 acre site and form a complete community of the early industrial revolution. Machinery in the mill is shown in operation on all opening days and courses are arranged by the craft workshop. Groups are asked to book in advance. (Wilmslow 527468).

It is advisable to check opening times and current admission charges, if any, before visiting these places. Unless otherwise stated, numbers require the Manchester prefix 061.

Timothy Ramsden

regional theatre/leisure

Town and country

Edward Fennell in Southern England

"For people interested in the arts there's a tremendous range of activity in the region, with theatre in particular continuing to thrive despite the cut-backs". That's the view of Stephen Boyce, who has just taken over as Southern Arts Theatre Officer and whose first challenge is to come to grips with the diversity of theatres and drama companies in his area. In fact there is a network of important theatres which virtually map out the boundaries of the Southern Arts patch: from Chichester Festival Theatre in the East across to Poole Arts Centre in the West; and running up through the Salisbury Playhouse to Oxford which now has the recently established TOOT (The Oxfordshire Other Theatre) as well as the famous Oxford Playhouse. And of course in between them is a complex mosaic of drama and community arts centres as well as a number of other major theatres.

Occupying the heart of the region is Hampshire and, as Stephen Boyce says, "We are very fortunate in having in Hampshire a group of eight drama centres which together make up a resource which, in its way, is unique in Britain". These eight centres (at Fareham, Winchester, Aldershot, Basingstoke, Portsmouth, Southampton, Havant, and New Milton) provide the foundations for the small-scale touring of drama which is the chief characteristic of the area. Outside Hampshire this circuit is extended by places like the Christ's Hospital Arts Centre at Horsham and the Arney Centre at Abingdon (both in the grounds of independent schools but operating for the general public) as well as the St Edmund's Arts Centre in Salisbury and the South Hill Park Arts Centre at Bracknell.

This autumn a number of tours will be coming from outside the area - people like Avon Touring from Bristol, the Brighton Theatre Company, and the Orchard Theatre Company from Devon. But there is also a

strong touring tradition within the region itself. For example, the Basingstoke-based Horseshoe will be taking round *Canterbury Tales* '81 (or a Hitchhikers Guide to the A3); Solent People's Theatre from Southampton will tour *Cherry*, a specially written rock-musical which "takes a cool look at prostitution"; and Aldershot's Live Wire Theatre Co. starts its touring season with *Peace* an adaptation of Aristophanes' comedy. Meanwhile, the major repertory companies at Chichester and Salisbury have national reputations. And the Nuffield Theatre Company, based at Southampton University, seems set to repeat last year's highly successful season.

There is excitement too about the emergence shortly of two major new theatres in the region. In Winchester the old Theatre Royal is being refurbished and is just about to open and at Bracknell the go-ahead has been given for a new theatre at the South Hill Park site.

Museums are finding this a time of considerable frustration, with a whole host of new ideas waiting to be hatched but a lack of funds to finance them. Rockbourne Roman Villa near Fordingbridge is typical. This little-known site is reckoned to be the largest in the country, yet there have been resources enough to open only a small fraction of it. The potential of the site is enormous and even now the museum and limited excavations are well worth a visit.

Until Rockbourne is more fully accessible, however, the Roman Palace at Fishbourne is likely to hold pride of place amongst the region's classical sites. For pre-history go to Danebury near Andover where the hill-fort is probably the country's finest Iron Age site.

Andover Museum is the responsibility of the Hampshire County Museum Service and is being prepared to take the Danebury collection of finds. Andover could achieve minor national significance by holding one of the most important Iron

Age collections. It is the policy of Hampshire County Museum Service to develop specialisation in its museums. Thus Basingstoke Museum has an important horology collection, Havant Museum concentrates on sporting fire-arms, Christchurch (still Hampshire's responsibility although it is in Dorset) on costume, and Alton on ceramics. When the day comes, now not too far off, that a museum is opened in English then it will have technology as its theme.

The region can boast treasures in its cathedrals at Chichester, Winchester and Salisbury and from 2000 years further back there is Stonehenge near Amesbury. And then in the towns of Portsmouth and Southampton there are rich mixtures of museums, monuments, and defensive works through which one can trace important bits of military and economic history (The Portsmouth Teacher Centre is able to supply a number of very good guides to the local historical sites).

When it comes to more active leisure pursuits and various country parks are probably the best resorts. The Queen Elizabeth Country Park at Horndean, for example, has much to offer. Designated as an area of outstanding natural beauty it covers an area of 1400 acres and is jointly administered by Hampshire County Council and the Forestry Commission. Although its major aim is to conserve the landscape that does not prohibit a wide range of other activities such as grass-skiing, hang-gliding, wayfaring, pony-trekking and an annual country fair. There is also the Butser Ancient Farm demonstration area which reconstructs an Iron Age farmstead dating from 300 B.C.

Of more recent historical interest is the Royal Victoria Country Park at Netley. This was originally the site of the massive military hospital built on Queen Victoria's instructions following the Crimean War. Although the hospital itself - apart from the Chapel - has now been demolished the site is open to the public with a Great Park complete with a Ranger and Park Centre.

Another countryside site with an interesting building at its core is Basing House - just outside Basingstoke - which was the scene of an important siege during the Civil War. Now the house is in ruins but there have been extensive developments within the grounds for both historical and nature study. According to Hampshire County Recreation Department it "now warrants a visit even from people who have to make it a day's outing to get there".

Needless to say the New Forest area is able to offer a full range of recreational activities whether environmental as at the Minstead Study Centre in the Forest itself, historical (as at Beaulieu) or active (the Calshot Activities Centre). And it also provides the kind of rugged countryside which makes a contrast to the gentle hills of the rest of the region.

Further information about most of these activities and places should be available from:

The Marketing and Information Officer,
Southern Arts,
19, Southgate Street,
WINCHESTER SO23 9EB (Tel: 0962-350999) (Please include a SAE)

Hampshire County Recreation Department,
North Hill Close,
Andover Road,
WINCHESTER (Tel: 0962-64221)

Hampshire County Museum Service,
Chilcomb House,
Chilcomb Lane,
Bart End,
WINCHESTER SO23 3RD (Tel: 0962-6624213)

Southern Tourist Board,
Ferry Terminal,
SOUTHAMPTON (Tel: 0962-36436)

Midlands

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Hartshill Rd, Stoke-on-Trent ST4

6AE. Ticket Office (10am-8pm Mon-Sat) 0782 615982

General

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In preparation

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PETER MCPHAIL

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Theory and Practice in Education 4
(Forthcoming Spring 1982) 208 pages
hardback about £14.00 (0 631 12782 5)
paperback about £4.50 (0 631 12947 2)

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books

Into a new world

Hugh Stephenson on unemployment and its effects

The Leisure Shock. By Clive Jenkins and Barrie Sherman
Eyre Methuen £8.95, 0 413 48200 6.
£4.50, 48210 3.

A Life to Live. By Ivor Clementson and George Rodgers.
Junction Books £9.95, 0 86245 014 4.
£3.95, 015 2.

Unemployment. Edited by Bernard Crick.
Methuen £2.50, 0 416 32470 3.
Rule Britannia. By James Bellil.
Jonathan Cape £6.95, 0 224 01898 1.
Stump City. By Andrew Friend and Andy Metcalf.
Pluto Press £3.95, 086104 342 1.

All summer long books about unemployment and its effects have been rolling off the presses, the latest by the endlessly active general secretary of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs (ASTMS) and his director of research. The surprising thing is that, for all their differences in style, quality and perspective, they all share pretty much the same basic analysis.

This goes for the essays on unemployment, reprinted from the January 1981 special number of *The Political Quarterly*, edited by Professor Crick to mark his retirement after 15 years in the editor's chair, through *The Leisure Shock* to the avowedly left-based analysis of the politics of mass unemployment and of its social impact at every level, *Stump City* by Messrs Friend and Metcalf.

That shared basic assumption is that Mrs Thatcher is wrong if she thinks that the economic policies she has pursued since coming to office can lead automatically to a new state of stable prosperity with unemployment at an acceptable level and price inflation under control. The various authors differ in their views of what would constitute "an acceptable level" in this context. And they differ in their forecasts of where unemployment will climb to, on the basis of unchanged Thatcher policies. Jenkins/Sherman are looking at five million unemployed by about 1990. On a shorter time-scale, Professor Maurice Peston in his essay in *Unemployment* thinks that the number of those actually out of work could reach three million by mid-1982.

But even the lower forecast is so high that one can without fear of any contradiction say that unless something changes (and in a quite unforeseeable way) the level of unemployment, not only for the rest of the lifetime of this government, but for the rest of this decade and beyond, it will stand far above anything that has been experienced in modern times over any sustained period. With the benefit of growing hindsight it is surprising that all the authors involved in these five titles feel it necessary to say something so obvious at such length. It is a measure of the extent to which Mrs Thatcher in 1979 mesmerised people into thinking that she had found some economic and political equivalent of the philosopher's stone.

Again with hindsight it is difficult to see how so many people could be so gullible for so long. For the oversimplified version of the oversimplified views of two distinguished economists, Hayek and Friedman, that Mrs Thatcher adopted via Sir Keith Joseph as the foundation of her policy in the government, programmes, but assumed the following: A reduction in the amount of money in the economy would have a transitory effect for about six months in slowing down the real economy. Thereafter, as everyone adjusted their rational

Session work

Martin. By Helena Frederic and Dr Martin Malinaky.
Routledge and Kegan Paul £7.50, 0 7100 0814 7.

Martin hardly seems the sort of boy which psychologists are made. Neither Doctor Malinaky nor Helena Frederic, the mother, convince that this three-year-old boy, with his gins, oranges and crocodiles requires

expectations, over a period of a further eighteen months or so the rate of inflation would follow the same downward trend. Then with incentives restored and control removed a spontaneous and healthy recovery would get under way.

No explanation was given then or later that was remotely convincing about the mechanism by which this benign revolution in the performance of the British economy was going to take place. Yet the Prime Minister was mystically sure of her ground. There were some of her closer colleagues who knew better, but not many. Her then Chief Secretary to the Treasury, the engagingly honest John Biffen, made the mistake early in 1980 of saying that the country faced "three years of unpunished austerity". She was having none of it. "I don't think there'll be three years of unparalleled austerity. There will be three years of realism and three years, four years, five years, I hope ten years of opportunity." (BBC Panorama February 25, 1980).

The message that is now coming out, however, is not one of hope. Even from the Prime Minister it is the much more desperate assertion that "there is no alternative" to the present mix of policies. The collective message of these books, however, is that there has simply got to be an alternative, because present trends are quite simply intolerable. It is not even a question of economics and money. It is that in present circumstances, unemployment, 2½ million, or 3 million, let alone 5 million, year after year will produce such malign changes in British society that something else must be tried. In more formal terms, the costs of the present policies have long since outweighed the benefits (of which there were some); and that imbalance increases rapidly with each month that passes.

Both *Stump City* and the *Political Quarterly* articles contribute much to the detailed picture of unemployment and its effects. The essays in particular build up, methodically and without emotion, the texture of what is happening, in a way which is quite missing from regular newspaper and television coverage of the unemployment statistics. *Stump City*, admittedly on a more anecdotal basis, shows how unemployment is, in a very real sense, dividing the United Kingdom into two nations — those who can look for support to someone in employment, and those who cannot. The deprivation involved is, of course, worse for those who can not look for support from some kind of conventional nuclear family. And the problem and its implications are geometrically worse in regions like Merseyside, Wales, the North East, industrial Scotland, Northern Ireland, and in particular pockets like Skelmersdale, where adult unemployment now runs at 25 per cent or more.

It is one thing to present the facts of unemployment so that even Southern based politicians and opinion formers are forced to accept that the country as a whole is in the grip of something quite beyond modern experience. But this group of books also tackle the next, much more difficult step. That is to show that things will now never be the same again, whatever "policy" does, in terms of employment, and then to draw political and social conclusions from that fact. The cold projections emerge best from the *Unemployment* essays. Even under a combination of circumstances so favourable as to be absurdly improbable, the level of un-

employment would still be over 1½ million in 1990. And, as Mr Taylor's contribution to the essays makes clear, this state of chronic unemployment does not just apply to the traditional areas, like Merseyside (though in them it will be even worse). We have reached the stage where the once arrogantly prosperous West Midlands and manufacturing centres like Coventry, have also become industrial waste lands.

It is not surprising that the work ethic is fast losing any grip on young people as they leave school. For the difference between the present situation and, say, the thirties is that then, though the experience of being unemployed was on average worse without the modern social security system, at least it was convincing to suppose that eventually things would recover and work, particularly skilled work, would become available. Under present circumstances, for literally millions of us, there is no reason for any such conviction.

Jenkins/Sherman embrace this prospect with a candour unusual in active trade unionists. They argue that politics and society must adjust massively their present attitudes in order to accommodate the new order. As well as work sharing, shorter working hours, less overtime, early retirement and the rest on a greatly accelerated scale, the productive part of the economy must be made more efficient and profitable, in order to support greatly increased spending on non-industrial activity, services, education, sports, arts, recreation, environmental improvement etc.

In passing, Mr Jenkins, a former member of the Wilson Committee on the City, Mr Jenkins asserts that the new volume of profitable investment required to support the new order can only be achieved if investment "sterile" pension funds and insurance companies into a new Public Investment Bank, responsible on a tripartite basis to industry, the unions and the government. As I have argued with Mr Jenkins in the Wilson Committee and in other places, I do not think that he and his colleagues have thought this proposal through anything like enough thoroughly.

Clementson/Rogers, as befits former Labour MPs, are more concerned that their party should come to terms with the enormity of the adjustment that needs to be made to traditional thinking, particularly a party so rooted in industry and work. For them a total "life ethic" must replace the present "work ethic" as the basis of society. For a "work ethic" is inadequate in a society where so many are genuinely unable to find work.

Friend and Metcalf are altogether more radical analysts. They note that, in the face of the present importance of conventional economic policy, the left has produced an "Alternative Economic Strategy" more public spending, price controls, import controls, capital outflow controls, planning agreements for industry, industrial democracy and the rest. But they conclude from experience that none of this will ever be achieved if it has to rely on parliament and the existing state machinery. From them only a revitalised mass working class movement could give a government the clout to overcome the vested interests. Mr Bellil, on the other hand, facing the same facts and the same vested interests, sinks gently into a sea of total despair which, for some reason not obviously clear to a historian, he persistently calls, feudalism.

and free-play. Martin learns good from bad, overcomes food phobias and begins to write neatly to please his mother. But a five-year-old who declares, "Mummy, my therapist gives me strength" shows a precocious self-awareness that we laugh at here. In Woody Allen, boy worry at here. The book lacks rigour, really (the pair now finds Martin a charming little boy), and real insight into parents' problems with children.

Jenny Oldfield

Mass murder is natural

Genocide. By L. Kuper.
Penguin £2.95, 0 14 02 2242 1.

This study makes clear that mass murder is an evil inherent in a society like ours, organised into units on a mass basis, in which human beings, like other elements in production, function merely as means used to achieve ends. The mass murder of human beings in such a context is essentially no different from that of plants and other animals that perform a similar function. It merely seems different because those aware of its occurrence are themselves human beings. Were other animals or plants to have a similar awareness, the slaughter of their own kind would likewise perforce strike them as peculiarly horrible.

Apart from references to various massacres that might qualify as genocide, references not exhaustive (South America, for instance, is omitted), the work is largely a discussion of what may legitimately be taken to constitute genocide, what its defining characteristics are, and an account of the debates in the United Nations relevant thereto.

That the debates were inconclusive is self-evident, not because of the intrinsic difficulty of determining what genocide is, but because of the intransigence of the several governments involved on removing from such determination those possible characteristics which, if admitted, might ham-

per them in the execution of such mass slaughters as were actually or prospectively in hand. After decades of publicity accorded world affairs, it would be affectation to pretend to be shocked at the cynicism, duplicity, callousness and so on manifested. Every one wished to figure as opposed to genocide; and to have the agreed definition of genocide so framed as to provide a satisfying whitewashing of activities that, but for such a definition, might be felt to deserve censure. Thus those engaged in mass slaughter on political and related grounds had these removed from any possible association with genocide. Others whose massacres became genocidal "by accident", so to say, caused the phrase "by intent" to be set down as a defining characteristic of genocide.

As if this contemptible nonsense were not enough, the reference of mass slaughters to one or other of the several bodies competent to deal with the matter tended "naturally" to be without issue, owing to deferment or other reason, since the executioners and judges were actually or potentially one, a sort of trades union of mass killers organised for mutual protection.

It thus ensued that genocide became synonymous with the Nazi mass slaughter of Jews, perpetuating a false notion which, aside from giving rise to oceans of tediously non-sensical "theory", has been successfully exploited for business purposes for

years and still is so, though with diminishing returns.

All this Mr Kuper admirably shows. His analysis of the conditions in which genocide may, or does, arise is less adequate. Contemporary technological developments toward automation, the obsolescence of whole categories of human labour, coupled with the population explosion, compel to the conclusion that, if production continues as at present, if society continues to be organised to that end, and concepts of the nature of Nature and human nature remain those framed thereby ruling today, genocide must result on a scale beyond anything yet experienced (even without nuclear war). It is impossible a priori to exclude from the definition of genocide, and its possible predisposing conditions, any circumstances likely to lead to mass slaughter, some of which cannot even be foreseen.

One thing Mr Kuper makes clear: to appeal to Governments and the international bodies they set up to stop genocide is useless. As well beg the author of one's ruin to become one's patron. Genocide, arising ultimately in production itself, can be ended only when production has been so limited that its inherent evils are kept to a minimum, something possible only to a society and human nature radically different from our own, wholly impossible even to imagine.

Pierre Watter

Splendour and tragedy

John Julius Norwich has followed up his *Venice: The Rise to Empire* with an extremely impressive sequel entitled *Venice: The Greatness and the Fall* (Allen Lane £12.00, 0 7139 1409 2). This is an account of the splendour and tragic history of the city from 1400 to Napoleon's disastrous onslaught in 1797 and the final surrender. Illustrated with monochrome

photographs, among them engravings and paintings, it is an entertaining and lucid chronicle.

Jan Morris has produced an edited version of Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice* (Faber £12.50, 0 571 118151) to which she has written an introduction which evokes Venice as it was when Ruskin began his work, the

way in which his view of the city developed, and of the writing of his three volumes and their influence on Victorian Britain. This work compresses Ruskin's tomes into 11 chapters, and contains reproductions of his delicate watercolours, some of his daguerotypes, and works by other artists.

Caroline Mendham

books

Obligations and taboos

Festivals and Ceremonies of the Roman Republic. By H. H. Scullard.
Thames and Hudson £12.00, 0 500 40041 5.

This book is planned around a calendar, which has been compiled from the many surviving fragments from the Italian towns where official calendars were inscribed or painted in public places. Scullard's opening chapters introduce some of the terms and concepts which need to be understood before this calendar can begin to make sense: not merely a key to the intricacies of names and ideas and the nomenclature, the intercalary months and the days called *feriae* or *nefasti* or *QRFC*, but all the apparatus of Roman cults and priesthoods and the rites of divination. Whether all this can be more than an arcane diversion for today's students depends on its real bearing on the literature and history they wish to study; what did it mean, to Julius Caesar for instance or to his cook? Scullard gives us a section on religious belief, closely packed with detailed and striking reference, and he properly ends with a cautionary reminder: "The voice of the ordinary Roman seldom gets through to us, and we therefore know more about what he did than what he thought in his religious life."

The calendar, then — the main body of this book — tells us what the ordinary Roman would be doing on most days of the year. The festivals are precisely described, with source material fully quoted or illustrated (the quotations tend to be less vivid and certainly less entertaining after the end of June when the surviving part of Ovid's *Fasts* ends also). No previous work in English provides this kind of reference material, which is more detailed and naturally more up to date than Warde Fowler's great work on *The Roman Festivals* of 1899. But the object of

Warde Fowler was different; Scullard is not (he says) so presumptuous as to attempt a rivalry; he is concerned not with origins or with meanings but with practices.

The third part of the book deals with public occasions and ceremonies which did not belong to particular dates: funerals, triumphs, senatorial meetings, *contiones*. Again these are most useful and well documented accounts.

Ceremonial obligations and taboos certainly interfered with war and government on many occasions, and it was accepted that they must do so.

In 176 BC the two consuls had to wait for four months before setting off to their provinces, because a magistrate from Lanuvium had carelessly omitted a prayer for the Roman people; this prayer could not be offered until the next possible date for a respect celebration of the Latin Festival. No way round this, even for those ingenious pontiffs who could find means to evade the ban on any kind of work being done in a place where the *rex sacrorum* might accidentally see it and the day be polluted. We may suppose that the responsibility of an awe-inspiring office weighed more heavily on consuls and priests than any private judgments they might be tempted to make on these matters. Even the great Scipio Africanus, when ready to cross the Hellespont to confront Antiochus, showed no sign of his usual independent mind during the month of March, when because he was a Salian priest he was required to remain in one place at any time when the sacred shields in Rome might be carried in procession.

This book belongs to the admirable *Aspects of Greek and Roman Life* series; a fitting partner to Parke's *Festivals of the Athenians*, which appeared four years ago.

Elisabeth Henry

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In strange tongues

Robin Buss

Psychology in Foreign Language Teaching. By Steven McDonough. Allen and Unwin. £10.00 418002 0. £3.95 0 04 418003 9. Modern Languages in the Curriculum. By Eric Hawkins. Cambridge University Press £9.50 0 521 23211 2 £4.95 0 521 29871 7.

There are practical reasons why the examples in Steven McDonough's book are taken from the teaching of EFL: the English-speaker's dilemma (which second language?) also confronts Hawkins in his study of modern languages in the curriculum. But there is a certain irony in the fact that it is in the English-speaking world that much of the most stimulating work has been done on applied linguistics while, in this country at least, the numbers of those willing to take modern language courses has steadily declined. It seems that we are content to elaborate the theory in the hope that foreigners will apply it.

The difficulty is due in part to the inevitable gap between the theories of psycholinguistics and the mechanics of teaching. McDonough's book, designed mainly for use on teacher-training courses, offers a lucid account of the theoretical debate on the psychology of language learning: this is no mean achievement, given the complexity of the issues and the controversy that surrounds such topics as first-language acquisition. But it is much less explicit in dealing with the implications of all this for the teacher in the classroom. Out of

the mass of material that has been produced in an attempt to understand the psychological factors that influence our willingness and ability to learn languages, he can draw only a few tentative conclusions for actual use.

In fact, he is quite right to be cautious. In the past, the work of psychologists was too readily held up as "scientific" backing for new teaching methods. Students were imprisoned like battery hens in coops called "language laboratories" (the scientific overtones are significant) and forced to produce meaningless utterances in strange tongues: theory has informed their torturers that "it is entirely possible to teach the major patterns of a foreign language without letting the student know what he is saying" (R. L. Polizer). Brainwashing, which arouses indignation when applied to prisoners of war, was welcomed as the "natural" method for language learning. It is hardly surprising that the victims escaped in droves and that the language laboratory is now used with a great deal more discrimination.

Students who are training to teach languages should certainly be made aware of recent work on the psychology of language learning and McDonough provides an excellent summary. But more than that the teacher needs the combination of common sense and enthusiasm that Eric Hawkins brings to his study of languages on the curriculum. He is a mine of information on the history of the discipline and, though he is perhaps too ready to digress into a

leisurely consideration of medieval Latin or the Tudor grammar school, he does put recent theorising into perspective.

Hawkins discusses such questions as the choice of French as first foreign language in our schools and some recent advances in methodology. But this main thesis is based on a belief in the educational value of languages. He is not so much concerned with getting British businessmen and scientists to communicate with their foreign counterparts, as with raising the status of modern languages in the school curriculum, and integrating the work of English and modern language departments. His case rests on the need for language awareness and the value of language study as a discipline in its own right, not on utilitarian or literary grounds.

Oddly enough, it is in the final section, where he makes detailed proposals for the application of his ideas, that his enthusiasm seems less evident and he slips into a sometimes tedious rehearsal of arguments on teaching method and curriculum design. In an appendix he suggests an outline course on language awareness for secondary schools, to help the transition from English to the study of a second language. The danger is that this could be taken as yet another panacea, a sort of modern language version of "classical studies" which gives the comfortable feeling that we are tackling the problem, while evading the real issue of how to make the study of a particular foreign language stimulating and attractive in itself.

Elementary venture

Introduction to Language. By T. R. W. Aglin, J. W. Crawshaw, E. A. Roselman, A. L. Williams. Hodder and Stoughton £1.25. Cassette and Teacher's Notes available from Henry Box School, Witney, Oxon.

The authors of this enterprising book have produced a work of such originality, with its conception simply and firmly rooted in sheer necessity, that one wonders why it has never been done before in this form for secondary school beginners. Its avowed purpose is a general introductory course to the study of a first foreign language, but in effect it achieves this within the framework of a fascinating venture into elementary linguistics.

We have all groaned with despair when the 13 year old confesses ignorance of the difference between an adjective and adverb. Careful study of this book should dispose of such experiences, but this is only one important facet of its enlightening impact. Its major achievement is not only a skilful exposition of the origins of language, rendered more effective by the comparison with the different stages in a child's ability to

understand and speak from babyhood onwards, but the most convincing analysis of how one language correlates to another and why there is such a wealth and diversity of tongues. This may seem to impose a considerable onus upon the pupil, but the various authors write so entertainingly and unpretentiously that each chapter represents an exciting exploration.

The accompanying illustrations are a joy - amusing, easily understandable and totally relevant. Each section sets cleverly devised tasks, to be completed in class or at home, which not only have the great merit of making the pupil reflect upon the necessity for the differing speech forms of his own language, but why symbols of every sort convey meaning to the observer.

This little book is indeed essential reading for those about to embark on a foreign language, though all other pupils too could not fail to profit from it. Teachers will be deeply grateful to colleagues who have given their pupils such a delightful opportunity to explore the genesis of language generally and unravel the implications of their own in particular.

Philip Lewis

Thank God for engine drivers

First Assemblies. By Rowland Purton and Caroline Storey. Blackwell £5.25. 631 12783 6. Gather Together. By I. R. Worsnop. Nelson £4.25 17 428031 9. A Second Book of 101 School Assembly Stories. By Frank Carr. Foulsham £3.75 572 01017 6.

It is all too easy to make fun of materials for infant school assemblies: prayers on the lines of "Dear Lord Jesus, please help us not to drop litter in the corridor today" or "Let us thank God for engine drivers great and small" (the latter being a genuine quotation). It is nowhere near so easy to find good material that is relevant, unhackneyed and yet within the age group's comprehension. These three anthologies will not totally solve anyone's assembly problem but each will provide quite a lot of help in most infant, first and junior schools.

First Assemblies is particularly good value, providing not ready-made assemblies but the parts for some two hundred occasions (which works out at under 3p per assembly). The stories are grouped thematically under such tried and tested headings as home, family, friends, people who help, animals, autumn and Christmas; and there are also a number of simple prayers, some suggested hymns and lists of possible follow-up activities - many of which are the obvious old favourites but it is still useful to have them catalogued, season by season and topic by topic.

Almost all the stories are specially written for the age group and if some would result in hysteria if read aloud in the staffroom, they retail

naturally to their intended audience. In their introduction, the authors claim the book "has been written with the multi-racial, multi-cultural community in mind" and though the stories feature children called Noorul, Rachel, Rashida and Winston, they are often incomers and their food is "special".

This is in fact a book for those to whom assembly and worship are synonymous, and for whom worship implies Christianity. Rather more open is *Gather Together*, an anthology of 108 short readings, most of which are followed by suggested "extensions" of the theme in question. This is an attractively varied collection containing legends and fables from many traditions, as well as more explicitly religious and moral passages. The language is variable: in the extreme while (for example) the concept of the Ganges washing away sin is left without explanation

A Second Book of 101 School Assembly Stories is perhaps less plentiful and more successful. A straightforward collection of true stories, fables, poems and folk tales, it makes no attempt to develop themes or draw morals or suggest classroom follow-up. The stories however have a vigour and a sense of humour that is most welcome. There is much that is original and nothing you would be embarrassed to be heard reading in front of your colleagues. I am a little puzzled though why a book presumably destined to be used only by teachers should have been designed and illustrated so as to appeal to six or seven year olds.

David Sell

French ingredients

Teaching materials for French. Compiled and edited by E. W. Brown. CILT £5.75. 0 903466 30 9.

This is a revised edition of the handbook issued by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research which covers the full range of materials for French with indications of level and concise descriptive notes. There are some 700 entries, indexed by type (courses, grammar, readers, etc.) and including filmstrips, slides and films, though this section is complemented by the

CILT publication on sources of visual and audio aids. No teacher will want to adopt any materials without examining them personally and CILT have quite rightly avoided any critical assessment of the works listed. What they do provide is an invaluable first step towards finding the books to suit a particular class, and their handbook should be available to all teachers of French. It also, incidentally, shows the paucity of materials in some areas, notably for teaching A level.

Robin Buss

TRAVEL-FAR AWAY PLACES

Hong Kong: Digital jewel of the East

By David Wickers

Hong Kong is much more yin than yang. It is a frantic, chaotic sort of place with few let ups. Take a gulp of air conditioned hotel air, step onto the humid streets and let yourself be carried along with the tide of a thousand bodies, all ticking away on White Rabbit schedules.

If you come looking for mellow moods and spiritual dispositions, a destination beckoned by oriental Karma, you caught the wrong plane. Hong Kong is a city on the move. Stand in one place too long and they'll tear you down and erect an office block.

While east meets west in the most political sort of way in Berlin, and geographically so at Istanbul, the cultural rendez-vous is at its most dramatic in Hong Kong. You never know where you are. Saunter down Jervis street and you'll find sellers of snake venom diluted with tonic wine, a favourite winter warmer. Turn just one or two corners and there's the Gucci in all its supple-hided splendour.

Along the streets of Central District, the downtown business core, men carry slimline briefcases; a few yards further west and they're more likely to have a bunch of live frogs writhing around in a net bag or perhaps a couple of tiny chaps tied together on the end of a piece of string. Hong Kong is eye-boggling.

Hong Kong's divided personality is rooted in its status as a Crown Colony. The moment you first hear the report of the navy's Noon Day gun, all brass, spit and clouds of cordite that waft over the sampan boat people in Causeway Bay's typhoon shelter, you no longer feel like a tourist, more like a novice ex-pat learning the ropes. Though less than one per cent of the population is western British, the stamp is unmistakable. Especially on the bowling green.

When Hong Kong became "ours" in 1941 Lord Palmerston described it as "a barren rock with nary a house upon it". He would have been stunned by his spats by the post war property boom that has transformed much of the skyline into a monosodium glutamate Manhattan. The rock, a mere pimple on the vast underbelly of China, is now one of the most expensive hunks of geology in the world.

With more construction taking place than in all of England and Wales.

It is fast becoming famous for what it used to be. Its finest architectural works - Kowloon station, the HK Club, the HK and Shanghai Bank HQ, the Supreme Court - have all been felled in the name of making more money. Even the delightfully colonial Repulse Bay Hotel is on the developers' hit list, unlikely to be saved by the whimpering of a few conservationists. Although the current lease from China will expire in 1997 the property speculators at least seem sure that the tenant is here to stay.

If Marco Polo were to come here today he would undoubtedly return home with hi-fi and photographic gear instead of silks and spices. Shopping ranks as the main activity on most tourist itineraries; the entire colony is a duty free Babylon stuffed to the very gills of communism with the glittering prizes of capitalism.

Digital and micro-chip wizardry at roughly half the UK prices is irresistible, although all those wise buys aren't quite so prudent when they send the airline excess baggage scales into heady gyrations. British customs officials are also known to rub their hands with glee when the morning magic carpets touch down, so be warned. You can also get ripped off, buying imitation instead of the real MacKoy (MacSany, MacNikon...), watches without the works and paying too much. *Caveat Emptor* may not be Chinese but, since 800 miles is a long way to travel just to get your money back, it is a useful phrase to bear in mind. Only Kung Fu wallahs enjoy effective consumer protection in Hong Kong.

First things first. On day one take the steepest tram ride in the world - "92 years old and never a slip" as the notice reassures - up to Victoria Peak, the panoramic highpoint on Hong Kong Island. From this perspective the Colony makes beautiful sense. Far below lies the harbour, scene of a constant pageant of junks, cruise ships, sampans, cargo vessels, navy ships, private yachts, the Macau hydrofoil, ferries to the outlying islands and the Star Ferries, the aging queans that criss-cross every few minutes between Hong Kong Island and Kowloon on Hong Kong's mainland.

The fare costs 6p first class, 4p second class and the ride is timelessly romantic.

But what of Hong Kong's eastern promise? Beyond the ubiquitous impact of five million, mostly youthful and bespectacled, faces, the blaring signs and ying tong sounds, Hong Kong's oriental roots run at their deepest down the back streets and alleyways. On the Island you go west to Kennedy town where the population density packed within the grim grey tenements is twelve times that of Tokyo (by way of sharp socio-economic contrast there's a multi million dollar racecourse recently completed on the mainland where the horses live in air conditioned luxury and enjoy a swimming pool with piped music).

Looking for a hundred year old egg? Wing Sing Street is egg street, where both new and anciently preserved varieties by the bucketload. You may like to take your aunt back a piece of deer's tail aphrodisiac or a nice piece of bear gall. Other familiar street sights include fortune tellers and coffin sellers, letter writers and librarians, barbers and shroud makers, salesmen of live grasshoppers for pet birds and fruit peelers.

In spite of the rash of fast food emporiums, which include a place called Dim Sum Burger and another chain whose billboards show an elderly Chinese lady tucking a hamburger and French fries with a pair of chopsticks, Hong Kong is a wonderful place to eat. All the great cuisines of China are represented: Cantonese, the local brand and most popular, Shanghaiese, Szechuanese and Pekinese. Restaurants range in style from the famous Jumbo that floats offshore at Aberdeen to the hundreds of *dal pai dongs*, the gas burner street kitchens that steam the night away.

Two, easily adopted habits are Dim Sum, the "little heart" brunch, an endless stream of wooden steaming



Hong Kong harbour: a constant pageant.

Photo: David Wickers

snack baskets served in restaurants that look like imperial banqueting halls, and tea. After a hard day's shop for GIs during the Vietnam War and is now a lively but rather charmless place, a topless ghetto that you'll find in any city. More romantically inclined visitors should climb back in the Victoria Peak tram. At night the view is sheer fairy tale, a popular haunt for couples in search of *Love As A Many Splendoured Thing* and single men with their arms round a tripod, their cameras recording the twinkles. And for those who can't stop shopping there's always the Poor Man's Nightclub, the open air market by the Macau Ferry that takes over from the day time car park.

continued overleaf

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Neil Philip

Founders and Doyenne of the careers advice industry, Ruth Miller has retained her up-to-the-minute pulse-hold on the changes in the labour market, especially as they affect women. She admits that theory and legislative realities still do not reflect a valid picture of current practice. Sometimes, the fault lies with traditional prejudices among employers, sometimes with the unimaginative careers choice made by girls and women.

Even today, many remain curiously unaware of their prospects in relatively new fields like Computing or Informatics, Recreation Management, Operational Research or Engineering. Others aim for glamorous-sounding jobs in Fashion, Design, or Journalism without much knowledge of the work or prospects ahead, while far too few become Surveyors, Purchasing Officers or Factory Inspectors. A little forethought and planning may save them from years of frustration or disappointment.

Career guides are too often catalogued as reference books and tethered to the school library. This one deserves to be taken home and read by girls with career ambitions, and those who still hope to have some dormant ambition kindled. Even parents can learn something about their daughters' prospects, and some mothers may be encouraged to take the plunge for themselves - even if they have to start first among the occupations listed for those who haven't got any O-levels. It seems that there are quite a few openings for them too.

Ruth Elliott

Hong Kong has masses to offer beyond the city limits. The once exclusively rural New Territories, that 90 per cent bulk of Hong Kong's acreage stretching up to the Chinese frontier is gradually being transformed by over-spill developments of high rise blocks that tower above old walled villages. But there's still plenty of greenery and small farming communities surrounded by rice paddies, duck compounds and vegetable plots. You'll also see pipe smoking Hakka tribe ladies wearing big black hats fringed by veils; in Kam Tim they puff and pose for the tourist cameras for a dollar a shot. Their water buffaloes are less demanding but never manage a smile.

The most tranquil parts of the Colony are the islands. There are more than two hundred, some mere specks of rock, others inhabited by junk and sampan fishermen who worship Tin Hau, goddess of the sea. Lantau is the largest, full of countryside and beaches that include the grand sweep of Silvermine Bay. It also has a monastery, Po Lin, where you can enjoy a vegetarian lunch cooked by the monks. Others easily reached by regular ferry services from Hong Kong proper are Cheung Chau, a junk building and fishing island that feels wholly oriental, or peaceful Lamma where there are no cars, just footpaths, to take you to its mountains and remote beaches.

The most authentic glimpse of China is China itself. Its recent accessibility has taken the sting out of peering across the border from the Lok Ma Chau lookout point, once the highlight on the New Territories tours. You can go to China on a day trip, as easily as a British seaside resort, for about £20 including an enormous

lunch of unrecognisable. The contrasts are, of course, acute. You can't buy a Sony Walkman for love or money but you can shop for beautiful embroidered silks, paintings, jade, ivory, porcelain, lacquer and other arts and crafts at ridiculously low prices (mostly available in Hong Kong too).

Much of the day is spent getting to China and back again but the glimpse of Shum Chun city is worth it. Those muddy roads, the slow, never ending stream of bicycle people and the sharp green hills in the distance bathing in wispy clouds will make a long standing memory. I can't explain why.

Ways and means

Cathay Pacific's one way advance purchase fares range between £175 and £225 depending on the season, economy class return costs from £685. For details contact your local travel agent. The Hong Kong Tourist Association is at 14/16 Cockspur Street, London SW1, telephone 01-930 4775. Expect to pay around £40-£50 a day for a double room (without breakfast) in a first class or de luxe hotel such as the Excelsior, part of the Mandarin group (bookable in London 01-583 5411) or new Holiday Inn Harbour View (01-722 7753). For packages try Cosmos (prices start at £389 for 10 days in January, room only). The best time to visit Hong Kong weatherwise is from late September till early December. It is an easy place to get around. Trams, airport buses, ferries, double deckers, mini-buses, taxis, sampans, hydrofoils, wallah wallahs are all over the place and fairly inexpensive. And anyone wanting to play the white man's game will always find a line of rickshaws waiting outside the Star ferry terminal, but don't expect to feel comfortable, in any sense.

迎級



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Mediterranean spring in Minorca

Dudley Wilson took a villa that suited all the family

I wanted an Easter vacation to suit three generations of my family, none of whom are especially keen on resorts, even less on concrete hotels and set meals. Minorca, still least developed of the major Balearic Isles, seemed a sound choice with enough sea and sand should the sun shine unobtrusively, a countryside worth exploration in any case, antiquities of promising mystery and towns still fully Minorcan in character. And so it proved. Even with rainy days, when our stock of thrillers was severely depleted, Minorca satisfied all the varying demands of young, middle and older generations in my family party.

The boom in self-catering holidays continues unabated, even stimulated by recession. We found the perfect arrangements in Meon's flight, villa and self-drive car package which also includes twice-weekly maid service and a welcome food hamper. Cold chicken, cheese, tomatoes, bread and wine from this we tackled on our terrace at Santa Tomas within an hour of landing.

The car, a no frills Seat, awaited us at the airport, as did a welcome from Meon's representatives. We found this vehicle indispensable. I recommend all those considering self-catering or even hotel vacations on Minorca to include car hire, at least for part of your stay. A car is especially useful in low season when many resort shops and restaurants are not open and local bus services do not operate.

Our villa, unromantically named B6, was modern, clean and easy to run; it had three twin bedrooms, two bathrooms, lounge and dining room, kitchen and spacious hall, all, I guess, cool to peak heat. Santa Tomas is developed with a few hotels and apartments along a coastal strip but our sea view was uninterrupted and fragrantly framed by pines. Minorcan shores have not escaped ghastly exploitation but the island itself remains hearteningly unspoilt and, despite vastly overscale



B6, unromantically named but modern, clean and easy to run.

hotels in the gorgeous cove of Santa Galdana, nightingales persist in their songs.

Spring and early summer are prime seasons for wild flowers but nothing had prepared me for the wealthy display of colour. On our strolls we noted several species of orchid, wild geranium, iris, lilies, scarlet pimpernel, wild gladioli and narcissus, to name but a few. Meadows were starry with ox-eye daisies and road sides ruddy with struggling red pea. From a bank fronting the sea a casual breeze wafted over the sweet pollen scent from a yellow carpet of vetch and trefol.

A Mediterranean spring is a real bonus, as we would return too soon to our northern version. Minorca is staging post for many familiar birds en route from Africa to Britain. Back home I heard a BBC wildlife broadcast in Minorca recording observations of birds soon to populate our gardens; burns, hedges and fields.

Minorca's capital is Mahon and a more pleasant, sensible, place would be hard to find. Its narrow streets, small squares and market lead to one of the world's finest harbours. Today this is strangely unimportant, but Minorca is Balearic first, Spanish second and flavoured too by British and French influences. Some architectural details suggest this, the distilling of gin, that very British tipple, at ludicrously low prices, support it and the memory of Nelson, often linked with Lady Hamilton of course, in names of streets, hotels and drinks clinches it.

The British military town, Villa Carlos (formerly Georgetown), with its handsome parade ground, contrasts nicely with the minuscule, and very French, San Luis nearby. Mahon's harbour, save for a few pleasure craft and the mainland ferries, seems little-used these days. The quaint quay-side could likewise be more fully utilized, for there is little here apart from the Yacht Club and the excellent Rocamar Restaurant which specialises in seafood including the distinctive local oysters.

Along the middle of Minorca runs the road to Ciudadela which counter-balances the capital. Football, athletics and municipal matters are strongly contested; between these two Ciudadela with its main square overlooking a very narrow harbour served by ferries to Mallorca is even better looking. Alleys lead into arcaded shopping streets of immense grace and charm while, down by the port, bars, shops and cafes, dug into the cliffside, are lively and colourful.

Minorca is lucky in its towns. At Alayor, selected a full, square

cheese from a warehouse shop where hundreds of hard, sharp-smelling loaves were displayed. Alayor also produces superb icecreams, refreshing monsters encased in the fruit which flavours them. Shoes are made here too and are cheap, but styles might be a problem.

Our nearest small town, San Cebote, boasted both doctor and chemist and in its miniature street and piazzas we discovered a good butcher and a bakery, of course. We delighted in our buying spree. The seemingly closed shops sprang to life as we tried the doors. We gorged ourselves on fresh bread and French beans, mange-tout peas, huge lettuce and strawberries. Everything bought locally like this is still inexpensive - wines too! Our only disappointment was that fish seems to be obtainable at Mahon market only in the early morning.

I found Minorcan landscapes reminiscent of parts of Ireland or south Cumbrian fells. The island is a limestone wilderness where stone walls contour the hills and mark out boundaries. Steep crags tower over verdant and sometimes richly foliaged valleys like the dales of Derbyshire.

I have left to the last Minorca's outstanding monuments, the *taules, talayots and navetas*. These are probably Ironstone Age structures and some must then be counted among Europe's oldest. *Talays*, giant stone, tapering towers about 16 feet high with tops 13 feet long and 5 feet wide. *Talays* are round, lower often sitting on rocky summits and *navetas* are stone, inverted boat-shaped mounds with a couple of chambers. Whatever their original purposes a picnic drive round several of these, and there are scores to choose from, along unmade country lanes sometimes makes for splendid holiday activity to interest sketchers, photographers, musers and the historically minded as well as those simply appreciative of lovely sites.

Minorca certainly does not just boast the crowds as Mallorca does and cannot boast of associations with Chopin and George Sand as does its neighbour but its qualities are many, distinctive and highly enjoyable. My villa package from MEON (32 High Street, Petersfield) costs from £239 for a fortnight in low season when six travel together. Meon offer a good selection of properties which are well serviced in a dozen Minorcan places. Apartments cost from £179 rising to £205 in high season but no car hire is included. Thompson Holidays operate self-catering apartments, holidays from five UK airports to Minorca and also feature Santa Tomas.

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More than meets the eye

Christopher Portway explores the East of England by bicycle

England, like other countries, has its regions designated as "areas of tourist potential", but the eastern side of our country is not one of them. The area between Norwich and Durham, all too often is ignored.

Aware of this, the English Tourist Board, in conjunction with its regional offspring, created the East of England Heritage Route between these two cities taking in four others as well: Ely, Peterborough, Lincoln and York. Using these as stepping stones, a visitor, armed with a comprehensive little map obtainable from any information office on the route, can locate a score of picturesque villages and towns, historic houses, stately homes, abbeys, castles, forts, bird sanctuaries, nature reserves and many other examples of our preserved heritage.

Recently, I set out northwards from Norwich to investigate the complex of routes that lay between the link cities and chose for my vehicle a bicycle. However, the Heritage Route is planned for the car driver who may cover it, or sections of it, in an afternoon excursion or over a full week or more.

There is more to East Anglia than meets the eye. You have to look for its charms however. The region was originally part of *Engleland*, territory of the *Engle* or Angles who came from Sleswig. Although the Romans drained some of the marshes it was not until the seventeenth century that a Danish engineer commenced the major reclamation of the low-lying areas now called the Fen Country which today includes much of Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire.

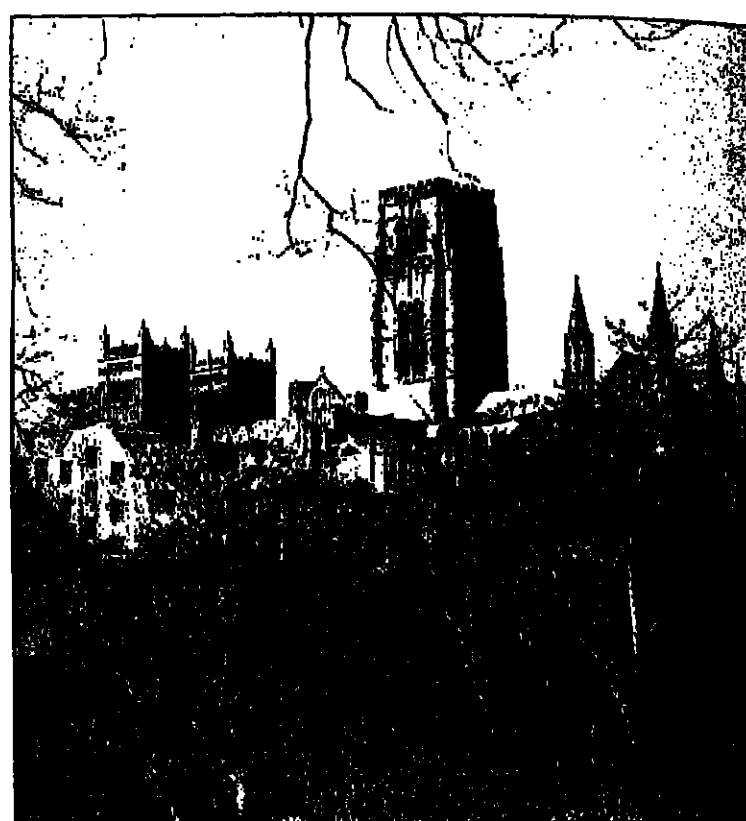
From Norwich cathedral - the only one of the six on my route to possess a single spire - the route leads through the Norfolk forests showing evidence of Neolithic flint mines such as those of Grimes Graves and into the wide open countryside of the link cities but its cathedral is by no means insignificant. Its grandeur dominates the little market town and is a landmark for miles around.

What has become a plain of rich black peat divided by ramrod-straight dykes was once a waterlogged wasteland. Along the original shore of this inflated bog are a series of "shore" villages each having their own tiny port beside one of the "lodes" - artificial channels cut to join the main rivers and providing access for flat-bottomed punts, the traditional transport of the Fens. These villages remain to this day and can be seen well beyond Peterborough, a city that is in the throes of a new development and expansion though its historic cathedral, prebends and guildhall retain pride of place in its heart.

For cyclists, the route to Lincoln is ideal, but the Roman inspired A15, arriving to the Humber, is of less interest than the veins of a less ponderous highway network on either side. Unspoilt English countryside here is strewn with captivating market towns with the salt fens and marshes of south Lincolnshire representing some of the richest land in the country.

My route took me through Spalding, home of the bulb industry and a centre for some sensational public gardens. Heckington with its unique eight-sail tower mill, and Tattershall, cowering beneath its 1440 castle keep, squat and aggressive even in ruin. Woodhall Spa - a forgotten township since its Victorian heyday - is a gem among an expanse of trees and the sudden rising of the ground like whilst Lincolnshire folk call hills; the Lincolnshire Wolds which ripple their way to the Humber.

Lincoln itself is a city of delight with traffic-free lanes of medieval houses leading steeply up to the majestic cathedral on the heights above the more modern town. Across the wide Humber - now made easier by the opening of the world's longest single-span suspension bridge - is a different world though still remaining a flat one until well beyond York. That battles of yesteryear were fought on these lowlands is made clear by the presence of castles standing among



"Half church of God, half castle 'gainst The Scots" - Durham Cathedral, most awe-inspiring and austere.

local farm buildings such as those of Wressle and Conisbrough as well as fortified abbeys like Selby and Howden. Medieval walls encircle the city of York and its happy blend of centuries where, from the Roman to the Victorian, each era has added splendour to the townscape. The 500-year old Minster is pure glory.

Northwards again, we see battle-grounds with names we learnt at school; Stamford Bridge, Towton and Marston Moore as well as abbeys surrounded thickly across a land beginning to rise and fall that strike chords of memory too. Rievaulx and Fountains are just two among prosperous stone villages and townships such as Sillington and Helmsley exhibiting picture postcard loveliness.

The North Yorkshire Moors provide a plateau of heather-cloaked scenery as fine as ever you will find in Britain and their twisting lanes possess some frightening gradients that had me nearly beaten. The A167 is no cyclists road but it brought me down from the switchback moors to less arduous pedalling. I had qualms about Darlington but found it an agreeable town which should do more to show off its industrial heritage than just a budding railway museum.

A detour to Bishop Auckland and, in particular, the excavated ruins of *Vindolanda*, a Roman hill encampment at Blagden found me on the alignment of a Roman road called *Dere Street* and, with the Wear Valley, I was in the county of Durham. "Half Church of God, half castle 'gainst the Scots", they say about Durham Cathedral and within the most dramatic city site in England, high above a loop of the River Wear, it stands awe-inspiring and austere. Northumbria's Norman cathedral guarded by the castle of her prince-bishops makes a fitting northern terminus to a route through much of our island's heritage.

Especially tailored for bicycle riding is the Cumbria Tourist Board's recent innovation, the Cumbria Cycle Way. Hardly had I recuperated from nearly 400 miles of the Heritage Route and I found myself pedalling this 250-mile circuit of all that is most beautiful in a region well known for its beauty. And nobody can argue that Cumbria is flat.

The Cycle Way, I was to discover, traversed four very different geographical locations. In the west, it followed the neglected Cumbrian coast passing through pleasant little resorts such as Grange-over-Sands, St Bees, Alnby and Silloth so Victorian in atmosphere one expected to see bath-

ing machines on the beaches. The towns of Whitehaven, Workington and Maryport still showed gently-fading scars from their industrial past. In the north the Way followed the line of Hadrian's Wall, the relics less apparent than at the Newcastle end though Carlisle has tried to compensate by opening up for general view its dramatic castle.

At Brampton the Way swung south by Talkin Turn, a charmingly-located recreational lake, and along the idyllic Eden Valley flanked by the Pennines and the Lake District mountains. Beyond Appleby-in-Westmorland the lonely rolling countryside is that of the Yorkshire Dales, the Way leading via legendary Pendragon Castle and Sedburgh gently westwards back to the coast at Morecombe Bay.

The route has been carefully planned to take in the interesting and picturesque things to see and to take advantage of the flattest terrain available. It is easy to be clever and take short cuts but this results in having to negotiate busy roads and missing out on some treasures of our realm. There are railway stations on or within a few miles of the Way many served surprisingly frequently by little diesel trains that are happy to carry a bicycle free of charge whenever a cyclist tires and requires to "cheat" for a few miles.

With one exception local buses cannot carry bicycles, the exception being the Mountain Goat Services within the Lake District whose headquarters are at Windermere. Their Wasdale Flyer service over the Wrynose and Great Ghyll Passes, with gradients of 1 in 10, makes for a sensational ride.

The most appropriate form of accommodation on the Way is offered by farmhouses - particularly those off the main roads which offer additional peace from passing traffic where the hosts know how to soothe hearty appetites and exhausted bodies. And hungry and exhausted a cyclist will be at the end of the day, exhilarated and triumphant too. Bicycle Hire in East Angles and northern England: East Anglian Cycling Holidays, The Book Shop, York, Suffolk.

Bicycle Hire in Cumbria: Rethambs Leisure Hire, Station Buildings, Windermere.

Maps: East of England: Ordnance Survey Routemaster Sheets 4, 6 and 9; Cumbria: Cumbria Tourist Board; 'English Lakeland Leisure & Holiday' sheet.

Books: Letts Guides: *Cathedrals in Britain*, *The Castles of England*, *The Best of British*, *Pubs*.



Have you ever dreamed of getting away from it all to a tropical island?

Takin' a rest in Saint Loosha

By Angela Humphery

Have you ever dreamed of getting away from it all to a tropical island where the only decision to be made is whether to have a rum punch or a banana daiquiri?

St Lucia (pronounced Saint Loosha) is the place. It lies in the Caribbean and is one of the Windward Islands, with Martinique to the north, St Vincent to the south and Barbados to the east.

I often wondered if I would be bored to death after so much activity - but I am not. I could stay here, maybe not forever, but certainly for a long, long time. Sitting under a palm-tree on a deserted beach drinking the milk of a coconut, which has just fallen down, is lovely - especially after the hassle of London life.

But it does have its hazards. Yesterday a sleeping dog was killed by a falling coconut! The young St Lucian male works hard at keeping in good shape. They do press-ups and slow jogging along the beaches, smiling as they amble by, muscles rippling and sweat gleaming on their black bodies. "Takin' a rest, man?" they ask as we lie there inert, pale and imperfect by comparison.

Must get some exercise. Walk along the beach and round the headland. Cannot believe my eyes. There, sitting on a rock on the full moon position, is a very white young man, facing out to sea and smoking. Discreetly walk on but he calls out to us, jumps up and joins us. He is from Scotland, and says he is at Cambridge. When I remark that he says he is working his way back there but, like everyone else round these islands, is "takin' a rest, man".

The three of us stroll on and come to a large old green wooden building. A pack of mongrels lie curled up in the hot sand. They greet us and follow behind as we climb the stairs to a verandah. By night it is a disco called "The Palm Beach Club" - a riot of faded pop-art and dead palm leaves. We collapse onto crazy coloured broken-down deck-chairs overlooking the sea. Apart from a girl sweeping up last night's butts and a few chickens scratching around, the place is deserted. Crates of bottled drinks lie stacked in the corner. We are hot and thirsty and longing for something cool and refreshing. What do we get but warm sweet, shocking-pink raspberyyade! The paint is peeling, the chairs broken, the drinks undrinkable but it is heaven here.

Walking back along the beach through the clear warm blue water, we see a small dinghy moored to a rock, its owner diving for shells. On its prow in big letters is its name "LORD HELP ME". There is a beautiful little boy with the longest eyelashes I have ever seen playing with a bright red crab. Claudius says it is a landcrab which he lets go and it scuttles down the nearest hole. Like most kids in the West Indies, he lives with his grandmother, proudly telling us he has another in Strehnam.

Next day, head in the opposite direction and discover an incredible old cemetery. If I am killed by a falling coconut, I pray they will bury me here under the frangipani trees, surrounded by family vaults. The rich ones are covered with pink and black bathroom tiles. Some have children in full flight and some have mysterious parcels wrapped in silver foil. All have fluorescent purple plastic flowers.

The less flamboyant graves are no more than a mound of earth with a cross made out of two pieces of wood, bound together with string, on which someone has scratched RIP. The names on the graves are as exotic as the surroundings - Flaviv Fontenelle, Cherubin Charles, Leola Modeste and Matilda Hippolyte - St Lucia having twice been a French settlement.

I see two men digging a grave. They smile and so I ask if there is to be a funeral today. "No man, the customer for this one is still livin' up there", they laugh, pointing to a group of houses perched on a hill. They tell me that the family vaults hold about five people "You know, man, body-cement-body-cement... like a club sandwich".

At the end of Vigie Beach we walk across the airstrip and into Castries, capital of the island. The original town centre was burned down and many of the old wooden buildings have been replaced by modern concrete ones. You can walk from one end of town to the other in 15 minutes. On the outskirts are clapboard houses on stilts, like brightly coloured cricket pavilions which I find so surprising since every West Indian

plays cricket. Every spare piece of ground is used as a pitch with old rum bottles for wickets.

The Roman Catholic church in the centre of Castries is the size of a small cathedral. The doors are kept open to let in the air. School-children and men on their way home to lunch use it as a short-cut, walking in one door, crossing themselves and walking out the other.

One of the remaining old wooden houses has been painted green and white and is a restaurant called "RAIN" - very Somerset Maugham - potted palms, white wickerwork and

Sadie Thompson posters and is run by an expatriate. New Yorker. The drinks are quite unbelievable (a welcome change from warm raspberyyade) with exotic names like Sadie's Sin, Soufriere Swizzle, The Reverend's Downfall, Brazil Street Banana Frosted and The One-Two Punch. I order the Reverend's Downfall, served in a coconut shell, garnished with a hibiscus bloom, and described on the menu as "A devilishly good wedding of coconut cream, pineapple juice and deceptively light rum".

Slagger barefoot back along the beach, carrying our sandals. Feel as

though we are going home after a party but the sun is about to set instead of rise. The sunsets here are breathtaking, mind-bending - call them what you like, they are compulsive viewing. They happen so quickly. That big red balloon slides silently into the sea without so much as a ripple.

Hire a car for a couple of days and drive around the island. It is about the size of the Isle of Man but there the similarity ends. St Lucia is lush and green, undeveloped and has few cars. I am told they eat them here - Pussy Creole springs to mind. Drive through the banana plantations and the rain forest where mangoes and coconuts lie by the roadside. A strong smell of rotten eggs assaults our nostrils and we know we have arrived at the sulphur springs in an extinct drive-in volcano where thick grey mud bubbles up like witch's brew.

We drive down the hill from the volcano and into Soufriere, a primitive, pretty old village on the west coast. Along the waterfront blue fishing nets are strung out to dry, behind which is a row of small wooden houses where an old, old woman stands in her doorway, a faded photograph of Her Majesty The Queen hanging on the wall behind her.

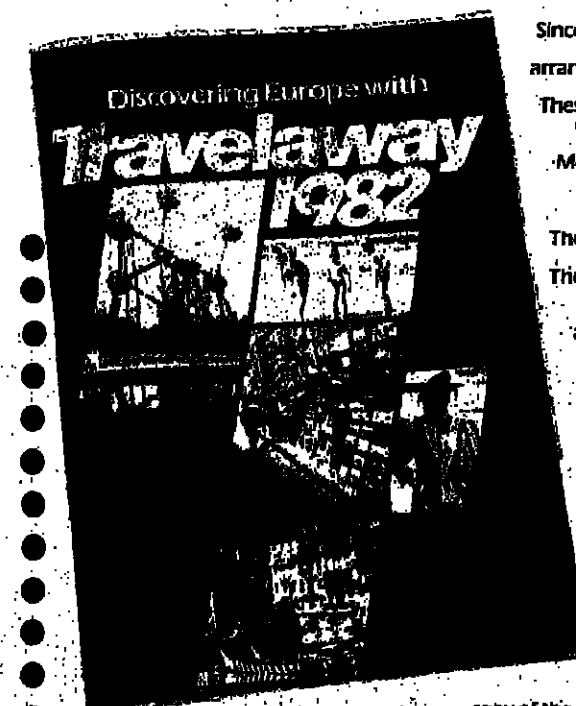
We drive back to our hotel along the coastal road from where we can see the twin peaks of the volcanic Pitons (Gros Piton and Petit Piton) rising straight out of the sea like two giant grey icebergs.

Oh! for a rum punch before dinner. Or shall I have a banana daiquiri? Decisions, decisions. *Pegasus Holidays (London) Ltd.*, 33-35 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 0PP. Tel: 01-828 21511 4584 - 7 nights from £315 or £275 for flight only.

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extra Visiting the volcanoes

Rupert Grey in Java. A long way away, but one of the cheapest countries in the world

I have a notion that time off from work should provide two separate and contrasting satisfactions: high-speed action followed by a more sedentary absorption of an alien culture. With this in mind, and with my like-minded younger brother and long-suffering wife for company, I set out for Java.

Stephen, my brother, has a passion for volcanoes. The more active, the higher on the danger list, the better he was pleased. There are plenty of them on Java and without ado we armed ourselves with a photo guide and set off from the Denpasar airport, on the island of Bali. Jan, my wife, who is of a more cautious disposition, elected to go to Semarang to stay with some old friends.

We crossed to Java on a disagreeable ferry for 10p each and hired a *beja*; these are to be found everywhere in Java and are a delightful and inexpensive means of getting around town; they are best described as tricycles with two passenger seats in the front.

Java consists of numerous smoking volcanoes, many of them high on the danger list. Merapi was one of them; and from the village of Solo, it is one day's climb to the summit and back. It is wise to set out well before dawn, to avoid climbing under the midday sun; my brother and I reached the first crater some five hours later. That was the last we saw of each other, for some hours, for the smoke is thick and all embracing, and towers some 3,000 feet above the crater.

We felt rather than saw our way through a series of dead craters, along a gorge echoing with the hiss of escaping gases; we were quite alone, but had been surrounded by an army. We would not have known. Breathing the fumes was not agreeable, but at length the wind rose, briefly, and cleared the smoke; it revealed a view that has us rooted to the spot.

Five yards in front was the central crater of Merapi; peering downwards fearfully, we dimly perceived the lava flow, a dull molten red, boiling and heaving mightily. A few seconds later it vanished from sight. The earth shook beneath us, and we retired, for to gaze once into the bowels of our native Earth was a sufficiency, even for Stephen.

Merapi is probably the most exciting mountain experience to be had in Java, but it is difficult of access; it takes about three hours and involves a series of separate journeys by bus or *bemo*; (the Javanese answer to a London taxi). Mt Bromo, however, is more easily accessible. Ngadisari, the village from which one approaches Bromo, is set among an impressive range of mountains.

It is an hour's journey from Probolinggo on the north coast, and on arrival there you will find the *bemo* drivers hail you enthusiastically; they all know where you are going, for it is a popular place. Rightly so, for Bromo's naked beauty will leave you with haunting memories. Set in a sea of iron-grey rolling sand, Bromo is a crater, within a crater, and it is best seen at dawn.

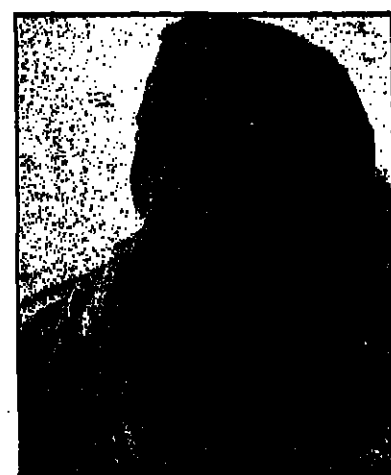
We stayed in Hotel Bromo, situated in a fine position overlooking the outer crater, £1.20 a night for the two of us, and set off at the following morning in the chill pre-dawn light. As we climbed the walls of the inner crater, the sun rose and cast long shadows over a barren landscape distorted by centuries of volcanic activity. It is still active, indeed it erupted a month later, but as we gazed over the crater's rim we could see only a gaping hole from which large quantities of smoke issued forth.

Some 100 miles east of Bromo, as the crow flies, lies the Ijen Plateau. It is remote and difficult of access, for *bemos* do not ply regularly along

the twisting mountain road that leads to it. Those who enjoy a mountain climb with something more to look at than scenery, however beautiful, will find this journey rewarding. With prior permission of the *Direksi Perkebunan* (estate management) in Jember, you may stay at the official guesthouse, which is a spacious house built by a Dutch coffee-planter 50 years ago, and this you reach by *bemo* from Bondiwoso for about £8.00.

Rejoicing in the cool of the highlands, we ate a substantial and tasty meal with the manager of the coffee plantation. At 3.00 am, we were driven in the plantation landrover to the start of the climb.

In the light of what happened next, I should warn future volcano climbers against washing in local streams: the one I chose for my pre-dawn ablutions was dilute sulphuric acid, and it woke me up with more than a start; indeed it nearly blinded me for life. Crossing the stream in daylight on the return journey I was unsurprised to observe the water was toxic green.



A sulphur miner, bearing his load with fortitude and a smile.

Four hours later we climbed onto the crater's rim. Five hundred feet below us lay a lake, sickly green in colour and a mile or two across, encased in perpendicular walls of red and yellow rock. The lake boiled, in places simply steamed, and in the air was the pungent throat-constricting stench of sulphur.

What caught our attention, however, was directly below. On the shore of the lake, was a bright yellow mountain of solid sulphur, from gaping holes in its walls roared forth jets of poisonous fumes, and dimly, lost from time to time in sulphurous clouds, we perceived a column of tolling human figures, bent double under great yellow loads, struggling up the crater walls. It was a scene from Biblical times, as we descended into the crater we fell into company with men of satanic appearance, dressed simply in loincloths. They carried their loads of sulphur 1,500 feet up the precipitous crater walls, and 1,500 feet down the other side.

Satisfied, indeed satiated, with violent terrain of volcanoes, throats sore with fumes and feet with climbing, we returned to the coffee-plantation, and thence back to the plains.

After two days' travelling, we came to the Niagara Hotel. This may be found in the village of Lawang, some 10 miles north of Malang, and it is perhaps unique among hotels. Eight stories of dilapidated marbled grandeur, in a land where few if any buildings rise above the coconut palm, it was built in 1900 by a Brazilian architect for a Chinese millionaire. The rooms are 20 feet square and 15 feet high, and it is furnished in keeping with its terrazzo floors, marbled walls and etched glass windows.

It is a forlorn and lonely place, forgotten by those who once loved it



Bejacs have many uses. This one is blaring out the virtues of a film being shown at the local cinema in Lawang.

and ignored by tourists; we had the entire eight floors to ourselves. It was here that my wife joined my brother and I after our sojourn in the Ijen Plateau; for £3.50 a night we had a double room, and for another £1.50 I filled 21 large vases with such a quantity of exotic, purchased from the local flower market, that I was obliged to charter a taxi to bring them to the hotel. It was a magnificent reunion, and that night we dined on fresh fish and vegetables, regaling each other with tales of high drama in high places.

We travelled together to Solo, after a few days of solitary splendour. Local buses are cheap, readily available and none too comfortable. You would have to travel half the length of Java before your fare exceeded £1.50.

Travellers on the whole gravitate to Jogjakarta, which is a large and exciting town; Solo is smaller, just as exciting, and there are relatively few visitors. Losmen are plentiful and cheap: we found one in a narrow alleyway adjacent to a shop named Batik Keris in Jalan (Street) Catur Suburo, and it cost 30 pence per night per head. It is clean and relatively comfortable and is secluded behind high walls.

We spent a week there, happily engaged in pottering about the riotous markets, purchasing executive numbers of batik sarongs for which Java is famous. There is a great deal to keep one occupied in Solo; for it was Java's oldest cultural centre; there are two magnificent Kraton, or palaces to visit, and it was at one of these that we sat for three hours, spellbound by a performance of classical Javanese dancing. It was in part of Java that the greatest of Java's early civilizations flourished, and the famous temple at Borobudur, not far from Solo, is only one of many.

Those who are wondering what holiday they can possibly afford next year have no doubt dismissed any where outside Europe as being too expensive to get to. But the airfare is only part of the story: what you spend when you get there also counts, and we lived happily on £20.00 per week for the two of us, including transport.

The return airfare is a little over £400, and if you can swallow that you will find yourself in one of the cheapest countries in the world. Six weeks in Java, including the airfare, will not cost you a great deal more, and quite possibly less, than six weeks in Europe.

Suggested reading: (£3.25), available from The Traveller's Bookshop, 22 Abingdon Road, London W.8. *Dillon's Guide to Indonesia* is a useful guide, and can be obtained from the same shop.

On being your own man in Iceland

By Leslie Gardiner

As departure date approaches, we grow more apprehensive about Iceland - a country which will bristle with slippery glaciers, ferocious volcanoes, capricious geysers, mighty floods and other dangerous natural forces. We shall be gale-swept and blinded by blizzards. If further proof be needed that Nature is in charge, we may see an islet arising before our very eyes. Maybe there are attractions in Iceland for the rock-climber, the explorer, the marathon walker and long-distance pony-trekker - but what will there be for us?

It is reassuring, then, to find among our fellow-passengers on the light-a fragile young woman going light-watching and an elderly couple who've undertaken to drive round the whole island, a thousand miles, in a hired car. To them it's a holiday. To me it's an expedition into the Charles Kingsley gazetteer - to Allowessness, Shiny Wall, Mother Carey's Haven, the Other-end-of-Nowhere and the rest of it.

We arrive on a calm sunny evening. My host Aldo meets me at Keflavik airport and we drive on a broad tarmac highway to Reykjavik. Roads have improved since I was last in Iceland, 30 years ago. "Only this one has improved," says Aldo. "The rest are dirt and gravel."

Reykjavik has spread out and sprouted a few hotels but it remains a pre-fab sort of town and its wood-and-corrugated-iron buildings would look cheap and nasty if they were not so well maintained and so beautifully painted in pastel shades. The suburbs, from a distance, are like a herbaceous border in full bloom. The cathedral (about the size of a provincial Methodist chapel) and the Houses of Parliament (like a village hall) constitute the civic centre, so neatly packed in the main square that the bishop might easily lean out and shake the prime minister's hand. The famous city-centre is a pond, clean and of a pure ice-blue, fringed with the rudimentary nests and speckled eggs of Arctic terns, which returned from migration three weeks ago. (They fly 10,000 miles from Durban but when they're two days late, as happened this year, the Reykjavik newspaper criticises their unpunctuality.)

Like the elderly couple on the night, we embark on the circuit of Iceland, the continuous ribbon of coastal road opened a few years ago to commemorate the country's millennium as a parliamentary democracy. First, the south shore. Ice-free but useless for shipping, with brown floods quietly pouring into the sea, with every inlet barred by sands and shallows, without a jetty in sight, this land - which merges into fen and mudflat and eventually water is Iceland's geographical tragedy, the physical disadvantage she had to accept when she became a fishing nation. The only suitable harbours are in the cold, northern, barely accessible fjords.

We spend a night at a farmhouse in Gauvitjabaerpreppur. (Memo: try to find some foolscap envelopes for thank-you letters.) How do our hosts occupy their time, marooned on the mudflats with only snipe, whimbrel and a few sheep for company? How do they survive in that landscape of sketchy roads, flimsy buildings and straggly livestock?

The primitive outlook doesn't reflect their economic position. Iceland, nearly the size of England with a population smaller than Southampton's, is a land of plenty, especially of smoked salmon. Inside seemingly derelict corrugated-iron huts you find huge domestic fridges, television sets, stereo equipment and expensive heating systems.

Our hosts, Mrs Saemundsson, wife of an angler, listens to classical music, follows *Upstairs Downstairs* (a great hit with the Icelanders) on television, reads and discusses literature with distant neighbours, watches her rugged ham-fisted husband turning out delicate water colours and arranges his exhibitions for him. (The farmers are forever staging one-man picture shows and giving instrumental recitals.) In her spare time, she is her husband's shepherd.

Last Friday the Saemundssons drove to Reykjavik for the weekend. They saw *Riders to the Sea* at the National Theatre and went to an arts and music festival organized by Vladimir Ashkenazy, who has become an honorary Icelanders and has married a Reykjavik girl.

In Iceland, it seems, people work long hours and enjoy high domestic living standards. "The emphasis," Mr Saemundsson says, "is on being your own man. No upstairs, downstairs here, no feudal tradition, no double standards in education. Icelanders never knew what it was to sweat for someone else's profit. Man is an individual, proud of his opinions. A man's country."

A man's country in more senses than one: at meal-times Mrs Saemundsson, a university graduate, is posted behind her husband's chair, from which she moves only to pour the tea.

We travel on, east and north, jolting over tracks like corrugated iron. Aldo suggests we stop and fasten our seat-belts: "You will thank me for it shortly." We move into top gear and the gravel flies. If we make it round the island there will be seven days of these rough, black, narrow dirt-roads, seven days of spattering grit, muddy pools, thumping potholes and steep gradients on what to Icelanders is a grand cornice of motorway standards.

By conventional scenic standards, Iceland is an ugly country, monochromatic and misshapen. Horizons are always mountain ranges with no harmony of line or continuity, no forest to soften the outline. On those disconnected masses of rock even the snow lies in unkindly heaps, even the clouds blunder over them in lop-sided formations. Nature, when she made this land, was in a vindictive mood.

You must traverse moorland country between fjords, fields of black grit studded with lava blocks. A tree, feeble and stunted, is something to be commented on. Solitude is always at hand but the population is thinly spread and you can't go far along the main routes without seeing a shack, a farmhouse or a sheepfold, perhaps a church of painted wood and corrugated iron with a modest spire.

At Thingvellir, we saw the Oxar torrent rolling to the lip of an escarpment, dropping in a glassy cascade, turning at right angles and filling a ravine that might have been trimmed with a Viking axe, then spilling into a lake of 100 islands - the whole scene enclosed within the crater of an extinct volcano.

At Krafla, we drove to the summit of an active volcano, to be drenched with steam and frozen with snowstorms while listening to a Japanese technologist's explanation of how craters are capped and the energy transported halfway across Iceland.

At Myvatn, we walked among bubbling solfatara and waded knee-deep in breeding midges and watched salmon leaping through the town river. We saw tropical gardens laid out among boiling springs. We saw the three great Gullfoss, three geological maddies through which powerfully of smoked salmon. Inside seemingly derelict corrugated-iron huts you find huge domestic fridges, television sets, stereo equipment and expensive heating systems.

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We took the light aircraft to Grimsey's basalt pillars, to earn our Arctic Circle certificates. We penetrated to Isafjordur, a cluster of pale blue, pink, emerald and mustard yellow cottages, silent on a fjord to which, a few years ago, a polar bear came sailing on an ice-floe.

We arrived at Geysir, a place of one barn-like structure labelled "hotel" - easy to miss, though signposted like a city from 50 miles away. It was late at night when we walked to the smoking heath. The hills were blurred but the sky was clear. At midnight in Iceland, a contemporary of St Brendan wrote, you can see to pick the lice out of your shirt.

The Great Geysir is a saucer of ochreous rock, soft and flaky like underdone pastry. The pond is calm and clouded, choked with the soap packets and bottles of detergent with which visitors have tried to stimulate it to action. But the half-dozen auxiliary geysirs are functioning. Every few minutes subterranean rumbles agitate the surface of a pool. A fine glass-green bubble forms, bursts, and sends a jet of superheated steam 30 feet into the air, and a column of water after it. Momentarily, the pool is a dry saucer. Then the column crashes down and the pool surges up and overflows and if you're in its path you get boiled alive.

What a sight the Great Geysir must have been, spouting to 200 feet or more, with a turbulence and temperature correspondingly increased. Mr Greipsson at the hotel describes the sight. He is 87 and palsied and lives in the past. He was an Olympic athlete once, they say, and in 1927 he came to Geysir to start a boys' school.

"It was a lonely place then," he says. "The journey to Reykjavik, on foot and with ponies, took six days. In winter the farmers' sons went there for the fishing. A rough journey. Some of them didn't reach the capital."

We are alone at the hotel. No traffic passes. This is Wednesday, the day when liquor is forbidden throughout Iceland, so perhaps... "No," says Mr Greipsson. "Every day the same. Few tourists. The bus stops, people come in to use the lavatory and go away again."

Day and night the geysirs hiss and spout, whether anyone is watching or not. We go out again to see them in the moonlight. Mr Greipsson stands before the Great Geysir, seeing it I suppose as a symbol of vanish youth, the courageous energy of former times.

"Dead, isn't it? Done for?"



Reykjavik: harbour, town centre and lake

He puts a tremulous hand on my shoulder, looks round the horizon to make sure no one is listening, and whispers: "I help it."

"With a special soap. Not now, when you come again. When you come back. I'll make it blow for you."

I think I probably shall go back.

Inclusive holidays in Iceland are offered by Twickenham Travel, Finlandia, Regent, Romantic Tours, Scamours, Travel Time, Weymark, YHA, McKenzie (Glasgow), Thomas Cook, Johnson Travel, Swan Hellenic, Pennworld and Countrywide Holidays. There are five flights a week from London Heathrow (three hours) and two from Glasgow (two hours). In summer a car ferry operates from Scrabster (Caitness) to Seydisfjörður.

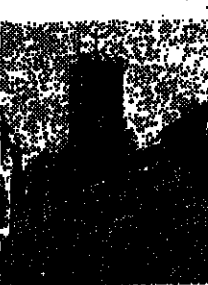
Iceland is an expensive country with roaring inflation, and good packaged holidays are not cheap. Sample: eight-day coach tour, "Iceland in a Nutshell", costs £460 from London. Off-season "breakaway" weekends and weeks are marvellous value at (from) £131, less than the ordinary air fare.

Car rental - Volkswagen, Land Rover or microbus - comes to between £240 and £360 per person per fortnight, assuming the vehicle carries its full capacity: a petrol surcharge after 375 miles. Full camping and cooking equipment can be hired for about £80 per two people. (See British Airways and Loft-ledir FlyDrive programmes.) Some increase in all prices inevitable in 1982.

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Gullfoss, the "Golden Falls", in Southern Iceland

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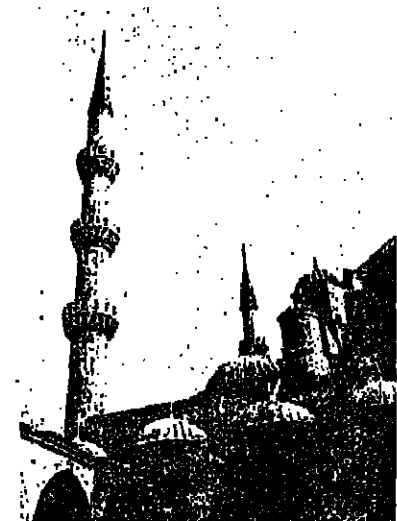
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extra



A secular state and a Muslim society. Turkey is a country of paradoxes.

TURKEY EAST FACING WEST continued

American influence is attested not so much by the ubiquity of the real thing - Schweppes, too, has its own local brand of cola - but by the survival on the streets of massive, fish-tailed Plymouths and Studebakers from the far-off days before the Arabs began to remind the Turks through the petrol-pump that while they might be members of NATO and the Council of Europe they were still a part of the Middle East - and of the developing world.

Development, as the experts make clear, both intentionally and otherwise, is necessarily a matter of contradictions and paradoxes, an endless process of negotiation between past and future. In Turkey, the contradictions and paradoxes are apparent enough. It is a secular state and a

Muslim society. Beer and soft porn are freely available but Islamic religious education has been reinstated in the core curriculum. It is a rich poor country and a poor rich one at the same time. In the newspaper a second-hand Mercedes is offered at £50,000, all the tyres on your taxi may be totally bald and the country's energy bill absorbs all its export earnings, but virtually no one seems to be riding a bike. There are regular power-cuts and a lot of flood-lighting and neon.

The Turkish economy is still overwhelmingly an agrarian one in terms of employment and exports. If you want visual reinforcement for the statistics take the nine-and-a-half hour train journey from Istanbul across the Anatolian plateau to Ankara. (About £10 return, first class.)

But it isn't necessary to go to the eastern provinces, where, the 1981 *Turkish Daily News* candidly informs one, arranged marriages and blood feuds are (*once* Atatürk) still the norm, to appreciate that Turkey has economic problems. It's clear enough on the streets of the big cities. Not that there are beggars; indeed they are few - the old, blind or severely handicapped. It's rather that, despite the fact that there are 1,500,000 Turks working overseas, there are millions more still desperately trying to find work at home - small boys selling water or sesame-seed rings or corn on the cob, grandfathers waiting patiently beside bathroom scales or gadgets to refill cigarette lighters, and batteries of men in their prime crouching to shine the shoes of passers-by. Tourism is scheduled to give a massive boost to the economy over the next decade. One hopes so. The visitor will be enriched by Turkey's past and in doing so may help to enrich its future.

Busing across the border

If you haven't got patience, fortitude and a sense of humour, don't take the bus to Cairo at Christmas. By Ian Anderson

"We have to wait a few minutes while a bomb is cancelled," the representative of the bus company says over the intercom.

His tone is nonchalant, his manner matter-of-fact - as if the delay is much like stopping at a red light in Uxbridge Road.

Several sheruts - seven-seater taxis made by Mercedes - pull up behind. Their Arab occupants use the opportunity to place a small rug on the sand, remove their shoes, and bow slowly and solemnly towards Mecca.

We are in the Gaza Strip about two hours by road south of Tel Aviv and on our way to Cairo.

We chat to our fellow travellers. There's a group of five Mexican students who are studying in Paris, two girls from the United States who have taken time off from their studies in England, and a young playwright who expects to return to New York with renewed enthusiasm after several months living and working on kibbutzim in Israel.

The bus trip we are on is a journey none of us could have made a few months earlier.

It is a direct result of the peace settlement which has paved the way for tourist travel between Israel and Egypt, overlaid by bus or by air. At the time of our bus trip last Christmas the number involved was a trickle; it's probably a steady trickle by now but nothing like the potential. It was about £220 cheaper to purchase a return ticket from London to Tel Aviv and take the bus across to Cairo than to fly direct from London to Cairo and return. A handful of organised tours lasting up to ten days were available from Tel Aviv to Cairo and the antiquities of upper Egypt but we decided to piece the trip together, one stage at a time. It was to prove unwise.

Accommodation and transport in Egypt were so taxed that even those on package tours were shuffled about between hotels. The independent traveller faced greater challenges.

Our bus trip was stage one of the journey. The service, which involved riding on three different buses, had been running for about two months, two days a week, from Jerusalem to Cairo, via Tel Aviv. The government subsidised company, Egged, makes the trip from Tel Aviv five times a week, supposedly meeting an Egyptian bus at the border, but that didn't happen the day we made our crossing. Instead, the Egged passengers clutched together to share sheruts.

The 300-mile journey from Jerusalem was scheduled to take about eleven hours; it took 16 hours from 6.30 am to 10.30 pm. There were three main reasons for the delay. First, the bomb (a shell probably left over from the Six-Day war which has to be detonated) took an hour to be "cancelled". Secondly, the Israeli and Egyptian border posts at El Arish did not open at the same time. And thirdly, the ferry across the Suez was held up for 30 minutes waiting for a break in the steady stream of cargo boats heading north along the canal.

The drive from El Arish to the Suez remains a highlight of our three weeks in this part of the world. In falling light, the bonfires of the flickering fires of Bedouins camped under the palm trees in the Sinai near the Mediterranean, it's hard to imagine such tranquility being part of a war zone. Beyond Suez, the housing is ramshackle mud huts with doors and windows open and television set, not fire, each the eye.

On Christmas Day in Cairo we try to put together the second stage of the journey to Upper Egypt. Our requirements are straightforward - a couple of days in Luxor and Aswan and a night at Abu Simbel - and well within what's possible, according to the Egyptian State Tourist Office in London which we had visited earlier in December. In practice, things proved a lot harder.

In East El Nil Street and adjoining streets, the area for travel agents in



Waiting for the Egyptian connection that didn't turn up

Cairo, the warning signs about problems at Luxor are apparent and probably should have been heeded. "Nothing available until the second week of January, not even space on the train to get you there," is the message. In desperation we try one last agent. He can book us on the brand new sleeper two days hence. Other agents couldn't. He is also adamant that hotel accommodation will be available in Luxor and Aswan. We extract a letter to the effect that our money will be returned if we do not receive a room in a four star hotel as agreed and as stated in the vouchers we are given.

The new overnight train to upper Egypt is the country's Christmas present. It has been in service only five days and is the epitome of comfort and class. It is German-built, run by the French, and manned by Egyptians, with one steward dutifully looking after each carriage of 20 or so compartments. The 400-mile journey costs £17.50 each one way and includes an ample evening meal and breakfast served in the cabin.

The train arrives at Luxor on time at 6 am. There are no hotel rooms. "You should not have been encouraged by the agents in Cairo to come here now," says Mr Fathi Salib, their local representative. He explains that President Sadat and Henry Kissinger are in the area and their entourage has added to the already considerable pressure on hotel rooms.

We come to admire Mr Salib. He sits for long periods in his office and patiently, firmly, sometimes excitedly, denies with tourists whose plans for Luxor have gone awry; plans he had no part in making. The most common complaint is accommodation, both its scarcity and its standard. Either Mr Salib enjoys verbal sparring with disgruntled tourists or he genuinely wants strangers from many miles away to enjoy his country (we suspect both).

Mr Salib finds us a room in the town's Coptic monastery. Besides an early curfew which means scaling a high spiked fence to gain entry at 11 pm and a hall clock that chimes *Ave Maria* every 15 minutes, the accommodation is adequate. However, it means extra expense beyond what was paid out in Cairo. We decide to see as many of the temples and tombs near Luxor as is possible in 36 hours and return to Cairo on the following night's train, foregoing Aswan where we have no guarantees that our accommodation vouchers will be honoured. The massive temple at Karnak, 3,000 years old and one of the architectural marvels of the ancient world, will remain a memory long after the frustrations of the trip are forgotten. It is a two mile cart ride or walk from the temple in central Luxor, a journey done in ancient times along an avenue of sphinxes. Remnants of the avenue can still be seen.

The local sightseeing tour by ferry across the Nile and by bus would have cost £10 each. We reduce this by almost two-thirds by teaming up with

a Londoner and a Glaswegian and share a taxi. The penalties for this substantial saving are no guide and the necessity to do battle with locals and fellow tourists in the mad scramble for tickets to the Valley of Kings and elsewhere. One man at one window sells tickets for the nine or so sites on display. Organisation is not a forte of the Egyptians.

At the station it's a painstaking business trying to determine ticket availability and departure times. All we can get are second class seats on the day train 12 hours before we want to leave. Mr Salib is able to change all that; we hear later on good authority that it involved a small bribe on his behalf. He obtains a sleeper for us on one of the two old trains that also make the nightly run between Aswan and Cairo, via Luxor. Our Glaswegian friend boards without a ticket and pays on the train.

It takes the agents in Cairo one hour to return our money in American dollars, minus the cost of the train tickets. At first they try to levy a 20 per cent service charge but quickly drop the demand after a brief argument.

A good deal of our time in Egypt has been spent making and remaking arrangements. It's been made worse by the time of year but there is the lingering impression that even at the best of times travel in Egypt will be without its problems. Certainly the demands for money ("baksheesh") will be ever present. These factors have to be weighed against the undoubted fascination and spectacle of Upper Egypt. Unless the traveller has infinite patience and is prepared to rough it, the best way to see the antiquities of the popular time of the year is by organised tour with the twin drawbacks of less freedom of movement and an overall price above what should be possible by making individual arrangements.

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Towards the attitudes of science

Philip Hÿtch reviews materials from the Schools Council

Learning through Science
Pupils' units, each containing two packs of 24 workcards, and a teachers' guide.
Ourselves, Colour
by Roy Richards and Doug Kincaid
Schools Council/Macdonald Education, Holywell House, Worship Street, London EC2. £8.95.

To take a somewhat jaundiced point of view, the decision to embark upon this series represents the recognition by the Schools Council that *Science 5/13*, devised expressly for teachers, has not so far delivered the goods.

An alternative, but equally jaundiced view, would be to describe it as an indictment of teachers, who need to be spoon fed with workcards rather than produce their own. More positively, and to use the tactfully worded phrases of the preface to the series, *The Learning Through Science* project takes up the need which became apparent for pupil material to accompany the *Science 5/13* units.

This raises some interesting questions, not the least of which concerns the efficacy of the workcard approach. These days held to be problematic. One wonders how far the project team was able to consider alternative ways of stimulating pupil activity in science. (One possibility, capable of considerable flexibility, would be to devise a series of lessons; another would be to exploit the enormous range of technology now available in producing challenging and exciting learning materials.) As it is, the Schools Council, in choosing to adopt this rather traditional response to the needs of teachers, will find itself in a market where there are many competitors, some of them of quite comparable quality.

A second question arising from the above quotation is whether this series could, or should, be operated in schools where *Science 5/13* is not part of the teachers' experience.

From reading the two units so far available with the accompanying teachers' guides, I suggest that the series could stand on its own and be operated more or less well, depending on the attitudes and skills of the teachers concerned. But what in my opinion gives the series its main claim to distinction are the conceptual links with *Science 5/13*. This is given explicit recognition in the teachers' guides, where such links are meticulously pointed up, thus ensuring at the very least feelings of inadequacy among those who are without the benefit of *Science 5/13*. The project team is careful not to be too specific about the age of children aimed at, but I find the suggestion "the lower/middle years of the Primary/Middle school" vague.

Production services by Prabhu Gupta

and unhelpful. Equally, the reference to Stage 2 of the *Science 5/13* development sequence is useful only to those who know about it. For these reasons, teachers will need to examine the materials very carefully. So far there are two units available, "Ourselves" and "Colour". Each pack contains two sets of 24 assignment cards and a teachers' guide. The guides exhort teachers to adopt a flexible approach towards the use of the cards, and one recognizes here, as in other places, the response to the valuable pilot work that the team was able to carry out before going into print. It might also represent a means of side-stepping references to "the loneliness of the long distance workcard". In any event, it is a good suggestion.

Cards are "designed to be folded" (editor's italics) into four-sided booklets. I wonder why this is, since it would seem to make storage less easy. The layout is workmanlike, attractive and clear, with an abundance of diagrams and illustrations. Overall, the content is very good.

I found the training and experience in observation a particularly

striking feature. For example in one of the "Ourselves" cards, the question: "How many times a minute do people blink?" is typical of the way the authors pose a problem so that the associated issues of how to count, what constitutes a fair test, a fair sample, etc. are encountered. There is often scope for initiative and originality, and, again, there is evidence of modification as a result of the pilot trials carried out.

The topics chosen correspond to the findings of *Science 5/13* and cover a wide spectrum of what children are interested in. There is nothing trivial, nothing patronizing, but much to give familiar material a new twist and the possibility of new insight. Not only are the topics worthwhile in themselves, but one is also conscious of the main thrust of the material, which is "towards the attitudes and way of working that embody the processes and skills of science".

The language used seems appropriate. It is clear and direct, but conveys the important message that conclusions should remain provisional. The equipment needed to carry out the assignments does not



seem beyond the resources of most schools, but teachers will soon appreciate that a good deal of preparation and organization is necessary. One problem that faces the producer of workcards is that of the comparability of assignments, and it is not entirely solved here. For example, consider the three instructions on one card in the "Ourselves" unit:

"Look at pets."
"Look at books for pictures of animals."
"Look in zoos and museums."
Again, on the card "See-through colours" ("Colour" unit) we find: "Make a collection of coloured jars and bottles, sweet wrappers, coloured plastic".

There is nothing wrong with any of these activities, but there is a

danger that such general, long term directions will tend to be ignored and may devalue all the assignments. Perhaps a change in wording should be made to indicate their status as suggestions for follow-up work, rather than as immediate matters. I found the grouping by symbols with-in topics to be an unnecessary refinement, and I should prefer the cards to be numbered, if only for accounting purposes.

There is no doubt, despite such criticisms, that this series is going to be worthwhile. If it maintains the standard of these first two, I'm very welcome to it. It appears somewhat grudging in tone, it is only because from such a stable one expected, perhaps unreasonably, a horse of a different, and possibly less traditional, colour.

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Subject	For	Teacher	Class	Score	Mark	Grade	Rank	Score	Mark	Grade	Rank
Maths	35		3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chem	32		2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
History	31		3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Geog	36		3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sci	33		4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Art	27		5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
P.T.A.	27		2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

form a useful resource as a factual bank, source of illustration and evocation of the glamour of the Victorian age. Victorian fiction - *A Christmas Carol*, *The Water Babies* or *Black Beauty* for a start - would do more to arouse in children a sense of what really went on not so long ago.

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Is play quite the thing?



Janet Atkin argues that nursery and infant teachers are destroying children's creativity and imagination

The place of play in teachers' minds is still fraught with unease and ambivalence, in spite of decades when "theories of play" have been expounded to students, while projects such as the Schools Council "The Structuring of Play in the Infant/First School" have apparently conferred official respectability.

Most nursery and a large proportion of infant teachers express belief in the value of play for children's development. How strange then that research, notably by Barbara Tizard, shows that teachers very rarely engage in play with children themselves, and yet wish that parents would play more with their children. If modelling desired behaviour is a way of teaching then parents will only be convinced of the value of play if they can see teachers actually doing it.

It is hard perhaps for professionals doing work for which they are paid tax payers' money to accept that play is a legitimate pursuit for themselves as well as for the children. Somehow one does not expect to be earning a living by playing or enjoying fun with children; the Protestant ethic shapes teachers' views of their own behaviour as well as that of their charges. Indeed play in school seems only to have been legitimised because of the cognitive gains that are apparently made through it.

Activities such as sand, water, constructional toys, Lego, painting, the wendy house and so on are praised for the way they "teach" cognitive knowledge such as shape, colour, measurement, one-to-one correspondence, matching, weight, etc. The possibility that such knowledge is only a by-product and that play (apart from being pleasurable - which must not be mentioned too often - shades of the Protestant ethic again) is more to do with cognitive processes such as observing, conjecturing, experimenting and problem-solving seems to have been lost.

Teachers are inundated with catalogues of educational play material with sections on visual discrimination, language development,

perception and so on. Highly artificial, carefully graded and prepared apparatus comes into school for children to play with. Yet there is probably more truly educational equipment in the local Woolworth's or Tesco's, as a few pioneers such as Peggy Wilding at Lawrence Briggs Infants School in Barnsley realised.

Visiting a school with my son who was then four we saw a set of plastic cars of various rather limited shapes and sizes, and of course only in the primary colours of bright red, yellow, green and blue.

"What are you going to do with those?" asked David.

"Well, they're to help the children learn their colours and they can sort them out into sets and match them", came the reply.

"Oh... can't they play with them?" said my son in a wondering voice.

I suggest that teachers have got play upside down in a way that few parents have, unless they have been contaminated by contact with professionals. In articulating the rather low-level cognitive outcomes that are incidentally acquired during play, and then translating these into the goals and purposes of play, teachers are destroying the very essence of the creativity and imagination that children bring to play.

Parents know that play is for fun; for children's pleasure and absorption, they know that children concentrate for very long periods of time when playing at home with something they enjoy and are challenged by. The idea that three and a half to five minutes is the maximum attention span of young children, as found by the Oxford Pre-School Research project to be the case in pre-school institutions, is laughable to parents.

Many will have seen their children concentrating for more than three-quarters of an hour when truly absorbed and, more important, not distracted by movement, noise, other children or the artificial break at playtime (I have seen exciting nursery children's play interrupted and stopped because "it is time for everyone to

play outdoors now").

In a nursery class recently I was talking about concentration and attention span to the teacher in charge, who had her own three year old in the nursery. "Of course!", she said. "Ben plays with the Lego at home for ages, but here he flits from one thing to another." The realization that perhaps her own home was a better environment for play than the present structure of the 60 place unit she was running, may cause this teacher to rethink her purposes and planning.

As well as confusion over the outcomes of play, there is still ambivalence about the words "play" and "work", which are often construed in most teachers' minds as having different meanings, usually opposite and mutually exclusive. "Working with the sand" has a quite different feel about it, and some infant teachers have now abandoned the word play because children are very quick to pick up the differing values placed on certain activities.

My son in his nursery had made no distinction between play and work, although he was engaged there in activities he now calls "me work". After three weeks in school, work was what the teacher required him to do, which were basic skill activities, and play was what he could choose and the teacher did not seem so interested in.

Very often this attitude at transfer is transmitted to parents. Asked about what would happen when her child moved into the infant class, a mother said, "They won't be playing so much as they do at the nursery... as I think they play nearly the whole time they're there... whereas at school they learn more."

I know the play is learning; they play to learn, but they go to school they *really* learn. I think the play is learning; they play to learn, but they go to school they *really* learn. I think the play is learning; they play to learn, but they go to school they *really* learn.

Print cannot convey the unconvincing tone in which theories of the value of play are expressed and passed over in favour of the real business of school.

Perhaps the dilemma facing nursery and infant teachers is that because they are expensive salaried and trained personnel they must

show themselves to be more than "merely" playing with children; putting pre-school and infant children into costly buildings which need capitulation and maintenance must be shown to be better than leaving them in their homes with their mothers. This inevitably leads to denigration of things that mothers can do - and most mothers can enthusiastically join in children's play, and do not yet feel threatened by professionalism in this area, as they do in helping their child with reading.

It leads to an emphasis on things that teachers can do, is "teach" which often means insistent questioning techniques, guided "discovery", pressure to finish the task or cover the ground that has been planned, and to get something visible as a product of the activity. This kind of teaching behaviour does not resemble that of mothers whose children are competent, thinking, and articulate.

On the contrary, these kinds of children come from homes where the parents provide an environment that facilitates curiosity and initiative, but do not direct the child or instigate activities - instead they respond and react to the child's initiatives, actions and feelings. These parents are like the teachers who achieve quality in nursery education they "act in the service of the child's ideas and actions". However such teachers are rare and many would deny such a role.

Can teachers be followers not leaders in this way? Can they accept such a facilitating rather than overtly teaching role? Perhaps the very word "teacher" for the person who works with young children is wrong. Labels do matter and do carry embedded meanings. Perhaps play will always be less than it could or should be if it takes place in buildings called "schools", staffed by "teachers" whose ultimate aim is to prepare children for "work".

Janet Atkin lectures in the School of Education, University of Nottingham.

Classified Advertisements

Index to Appointments Vacant, Wanted and other classifications

Appointments vacant

Nursery Education
Deputy Headships Senior Masters/Mistresses 51
Other Appointments 51

Primary Education

Headship 51
Deputy Headships Senior Masters/Mistresses 52
Scale 2 Posts 53
Scale 1 Posts 54

Middle School Education

Deputy Headships Senior Masters/Mistresses 54
Remedial Posts 54
Art and Design 54
English 54
Mathematics 54
Modern Languages 54
Pastoral 54
Physical Education 54
Science 54
Other than by Subjects 54

Secondary Education

Headships 55
Deputy Headships Senior Masters/Mistresses 55
Remedial Posts 56
Art and Design 56
Careers 56
Commercial Subjects 56
Computer Studies 58
Economics 58
English 58
Geography 60
History 61
Home Economics 61
Humanities 62
Mathematics 62
Modern Languages 63
Music 64
Pastoral 64
Physical Education 64
Religious Education 65
Rural Science 65
Science 65
Social Studies 66
Speech and Drama 66
Technical Studies 66
Other than by Subjects 66

Sixth Form and Tertiary Colleges

Headships 67
Scale 2 Posts 67
Scale 1 Posts 67
Special Education
Headships 67
Deputy Headships Senior Masters/Mistresses 67
Heads of Department 67
Scale 2 Posts 67
Scale 1 Posts 68
Appointments in Scotland 69

Independent Schools

Headships 69
Deputy Headships Senior Masters/Mistresses 69
Classics 69
Economics 69
English 69
Other than by Subjects 69
Colleges of Further Education
Heads of Department 71
Other Appointments 71

History 70
Home Economics 70
Mathematics 70
Modern Languages 70
Music 70
Pastoral 70
Physical Education 70
Religious Education 70
Science 70
Speech and Drama 71
Technical Studies 71
Other than by Subjects 71

Preparatory Schools

Headships 71
Art and Design 71
English 71
Mathematics 71
Modern Languages 71
Music 71
Other than by Subjects 71

Colleges and Departments of Art 73
Other Appointments 73
Universities Appointments 73
Fellowships, Studentships and Research Awards 74
Colleges of Higher Education Other Appointments 74
Adult Education 74
Youth and Community Service 74
Overseas Appointments 75
Administration Local Education Authority 76
Administration General 76
Child Care 77

Education Psychologists 77
Examiners 77
Miscellaneous 77
Outdoor Education 78
English as a Foreign Language 78
Appointments wanted 78
Educational Courses 78
Personal Announcements 78
For Sale and Wanted 78
Holidays and Accommodation 79
Properties for Sale and Wanted 79

Nursery Education

Deputy Headships
Second Masters/Mistresses

Primary School Education

Headships

Other Appointments

Headships

Headships

Headships

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Forms obtainable from the Headteacher, 30, returned as soon as possible (SAB). (254096)

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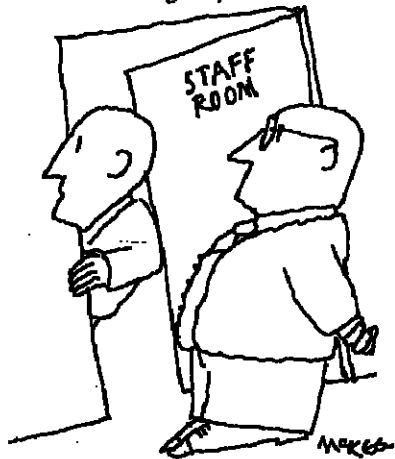
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Break

Man at the bridge

John Thorn's clever and elegant double-edged attack on Tory and Labour education policies at the Headmasters' Conference this week (page 4) was more powerful since it came from one of the least political of the major public school heads.

Thorn has now run Winchester for some 12 years (as in the maintained sector, it's getting harder to find fresh fields for successful heads to conquer). In that time, most of his public appearances have concentrated on pleas for keeping a strong artistic and expressive streak in the curriculum (perhaps his collected speeches might be added to Sir Keith's reading list).



sixth formers to another room...



John Thorn of Winchester

He's always had a good turn of phrase; "If you ride Blake's Tyger it is difficult to get off" he ended one call for a tolerant approach to teenage pop culture. When others were congratulating themselves on the new conservatism of students in the late 1970, Thorn was asking "have we lost more than we gained".

He came to Winchester from Repton where, according to one old boy, he managed to "free the place from the heavies". Indeed, in 1968, the TES was running alarming headlines: "Repton pupils get more authority how to use power". The sixth formers, it appeared, were being involved in discussions on the running of the school.

At Winchester, one of the first things he did was to get to know the boys (and even more radical) their parents. He initiated a day where parents of first years come to the school and meet the teachers - discovering that some of the aged sticks their sons have described are in fact just out of college.

He - like other dedicated but enlightened public school heads - is a frustrated bridge builder between state and public schools: so far non-one has found a satisfactory way of building a bridge between comprehensive and highly selective schools that doesn't damage the comprehensives.

Still, his daughter was one of the many students who crossed the bridge the other way, from private schools to Hampshire and Surrey's sixth form colleges.

Thorn was open about his own politics at the HMC. He described himself as "a floating voter - seaisick with floating."

Perhaps the most sobering thought at the HMC came from another strong exponent of the arts - The Rev Professor Moelwyn Merchant. He said that all the arithmetic learnt by children between the ages of five and ten could be economically learnt in one term when they were ten. "What a great saving..." he said.

Throwing money at fashionable problems

Amid mounting fury and dismay at the Social Science Research Council's recent proposals to reorganize itself, the chairmanship of the SSRC's Education Research Board is changing hands. Jack Wrigley, professor of education at Reading, is handing over to Gerry Bernbaum, professor of education at Leicester.

Bernbaum will take charge for a year, while the new structure of the Council is worked out. So far, the proposal is that, instead of the 15 or so subject committees that now look at research proposals, the Council will operate through six main boards. The boards will cover: Education and Development; Management Industry and Employment; Politics, Government and International Relations; Social Policy; Economic Issues; and Environment, Planning and Housing.

Critics of the scheme have pointed out the neat dovetailing of most of these with government departments - at a time when most departments have wound up most of their own research activities. Subjects like psychology, statistics, history and social anthropology will be scattered between different boards.

This outline plan went through a two-day Council meeting in July. It caused a good deal of fairly angry discussion the first evening. But on the second day, in more formal session, it was accepted. There was no vote - apparently the Council doesn't go in for votes.

Michael Posner, the £19,661 part-time chairman of the council is said to have argued that the Council's survival depended on a reorganization that made it looked more practical and problem-oriented to a hostile government.

Posner is a Cambridge economist who was economic adviser to the old Ministry of Power and deputy economic adviser to the Treasury under Labour governments. He is a member of the Post Office and British Rail Boards, and took over the SSRC in 1979 just in time for the new Tory government.

Next week the SSRC is sending out an eight page discussion document to anyone interested. It will invite suggestions on the details of

the new scheme - but the main lines appear to have been set.

One person who will not be there to discuss the details is Professor Chelley Halsey, who has been booted off the Council (or, more properly, has not been given the usual second term of office). Council members are political appointments.

Halsey is quick to point out that his removal is a separate issue from his views on the reorganization, and the two should not be confused. "The fundamental issue is between discipline-based and problem-based research", he says.

"I'm an ego-old addict of problems", (Halsey, of course, was the director of that major problem-based research on educational priority areas, jointly funded by the Department of Education and the SSRC). "But I believe that disciplinary organization is the only way."

Throwing money at fashionable problems is one way never to solve them, says Halsey, and sooner or later people still realize the new system brings even lower returns than the old. "There's always waste in research, but there will be more if you decide to commission research into football hooligans and get together people supposed to know about it - then tell the people who want to study tribal organizations in primitive societies to go away."

"People suppose they can sit in wisdom on central committees and have good ideas about research. Good ideas come in little alleys between university buildings when someone tries out his latest idea on his mates."

The Educational Research Board is likely to come through the changes virtually unchanged. As it happens, it presents an interesting case study in how the research initiatives idea works in practice. So far it has taken two initiatives, one on pre-school, which is now over, and one on accountability, which is in hand.

On the pre-school initiative they funded many small-scale projects that individual researchers put forward when they heard of the committee's interest. But early hopes of inventing a major project came to nothing, and the ERB ended by giving

Jerome Bruner, then at Oxford, the major grant to do what he liked with. (He did quite a lot, but the Board were not altogether happy about it.)

The accountability exercise started with grand ideas that lawyers and academics might be interested in putting up projects. They were not. So far the board's special accountability panel have funded a small study on parents and teachers; something on science evaluation by Dr Wynne Harlen and Professor Black of Chelsea College, and a comparative French-English study on *Constants and Context in Educational Accountability*.

Professor Maurice Kogan is doing a think-piece on "theoretical and operational aspects of accountability in education". Gerry Fowler is doing political accountability and (teachers take heart) Professors Tessa Blackstone and Harvey Goldstone are doing an evaluation of testing at both local authority and APU level.

Meanwhile, a good idea from a Leicester alley that the SSRC took up, has blossomed into the major picture of junior education produced by Brian Simon and Maurice Galton's Oracle project.

And a creative use of the Scottish Educational Data Archive by Andrew McPherson, also funded by the Council, produced that extraordinary portrayal of Scottish school leavers view of education, *Tell them From Me*. Game to Professor Halsey, but it looks as if the match is already over.

Aristides

Next week

■ Mary Hoffman on awarding the Other Award.
■ Martin Bradley on under-five policy.

■ Booker John Weighman on the English language in its infinite global variety.
■ Special articles on European schoolbook publishing to coincide with the Frankfurt Book Fair.

Personal column

Mary Warnock

Novel pleasures

How many people, returning to school at the beginning of this term will have given up English Literature with sighs of relief, or cries of delight? Many I should think. In season and out of season I preach that English Literature as an examination subject should be a minority subject. For other people English Literature at school, like other arts subjects, should be for pleasure, the pleasure of the pupil, no one else. It is a double betrayal to teach English literature in a way that children are thankful to give it up.

First it's a betrayal of good teaching, which ought to encourage pupils to continue, or at least enjoy it while they study it. Secondly, it is a betrayal of art, whose aim is to please.

That the point of art is pleasure seems to me so obvious. Everyone from Plato, through Aquinas, to Kant knew that. It is true that Romanticism may briefly have got people to believe that art was for the self-expression of the artist; and the new romantics of the fifties may have gone on with this, to the point of believing that art, at least at school, was essentially therapeutic. But a serious artist knows that what they want is to communicate; and that an artist cannot communicate, anymore than a radio station can, unless it pleases. Indeed, the sense of successful communication is the pleasure of art. And after all, as Trollope said of the novelist, an artist must please, because their work can be rejected "without the burden of guilt".

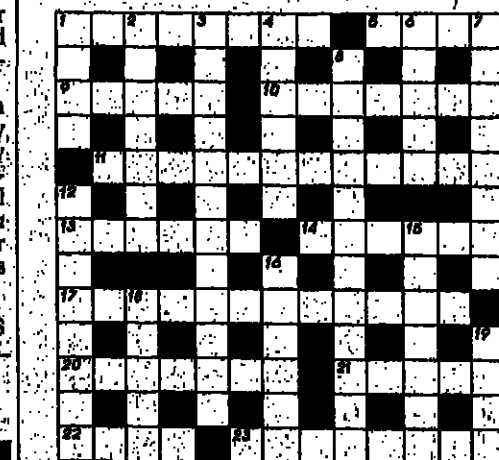
Why is it, then, that teachers are so prone to make their pupils feel the burden of guilt if they don't like what is offered them as art? I think it is partly because of a deep horror of the concept of pleasure. At a conference on aesthetic education the other day where I tried to argue for the simple-minded view that the point of art was to please, and that therefore art-education must be enjoyable, I was told that this was a dangerous doctrine, which, even if teachers might believe it, they must not avow. For if government, or local authorities, began to think that the only point of education in the arts was to give pleasure to the pupils (whether immediately or in the future) then this would be a perfect reason for cutting arts teaching. "Mere" pleasure would be sacrificed without hesitation for the sake of utility or moral improvement. One ought, I was told, to cook up an argument for the teaching of art which would show that it was useful, and morally beneficial as well.

If politicians begin to argue that education in the arts is dispensable even that it should be penalised (Lord Crowther-Hunt was quoted in the House of Lords the other day as having said that people who had read Chaucers at Oxford should not be permitted to enter the Civil Service) they might reflect that as a matter of fact the purpose of all education is pleasure, of a kind. Even the most strictly knowledge-orientated education is designed to give to the pupil the pleasures and satisfactions of understanding and being able to control the world. Every teacher knows that the moment when their pupils begin to enjoy what they are doing, whether it is solving equations or translating things from French or throwing a pot, then it is for him, the teacher, the moment of climax. Then he can think "It's worked, I've succeeded". I am not saying that all education must be fun all the time. But the aim of it is pleasure and enjoyment, and the sense of more possible pleasures to come.

So it cannot be right to compel people to pursue studies in the arts, the whole point of which is to give pleasure, in such a way that not only is it boring at the time, but it kills all possible pleasure for years to come. How often one hears, even from quite intelligent people, that they have been "put off" some author because they "did" him at school. Even those who are not put off are quite forget how to read a book for pleasure, so infected do they become with the disease of comparing and contrasting, or unravelling the symbolism or the balanced structure of the plot. Perhaps we can take heart from the research recently published which showed that, in primary schools, children get on better with their reading when they are allowed to read to themselves and read what they enjoy, instead of having to read aloud to the teacher from a prescribed text. Let us apply the same principle, *mutatis mutandis* to secondary school, and pursue pleasure as a dangerous doctrine, which, even if teachers might believe it, they must not avow. For if government, or local authorities, began to think that the only point of education in the arts was to give pleasure to the pupils (whether immediately or in the future) then this would be a perfect reason for cutting arts teaching. "Mere" pleasure would be sacrificed without hesitation for the sake of utility or moral improvement. One ought, I was told, to cook up an argument for the teaching of art which would show that it was useful, and morally beneficial as well.

TES Crossword No. 18

by Rufus



- Down
- 1 Home fixture for City (4)
 - 2 A rising little place noted for its industry (3-4)
 - 3 A blinking shunt (5,7)
 - 4 Break a hole in a wall (6)
 - 5 Year out about 18 more (5)
 - 6 Daring kind of chop that makes the head lines (4,4)
 - 7 Key phrase (7,9)
 - 8 One naturally repelled from the rest of humanity (8)
 - 9 Down-at-foot (7)
 - 10 Found, we hear, but revealed virtuous (6)
 - 11 They're inclined to be chivalrous (5)
 - 12 The king of vegetables (4)

- Across
- 1 Air force admiral (8)
 - 2 I see these voices and sound (4)
 - 3 Not qualified to sum up (5)
 - 4 Money flap (7)
 - 5 An example of permissive legislation (9,3)
 - 6 Turns out to have a game on board (6)
 - 7 How to march off foot (6)
 - 8 Spring water (5,7)
 - 9 Farmer's aphorism: so quires after (7)
 - 10 Music for a man to perform (5)
 - 11 A considered break-out (4)
 - 12 Anti-opponent of comic pollution (6)

